The New REPUBLIC

October 27, 1941

Fall Book Number

Reviews, Articles, Verse

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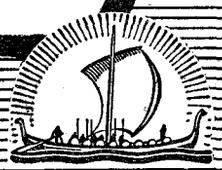

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UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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Germans Before Moscow

By October 21, the situation in the lines before Moscow did not seem quite so desperate as it had a week earlier. The German blitz had slowed down, and at some points the Russians had actually pushed the invaders back. It was again clear that each great German thrust can go on only for a short time; and that the early German announcements of success in each case are a pack of lies put out for their temporary psychological effect.

At the same time, the situation is undoubtedly grave. When civilians are mobilized for resistance it is a proof of grim determination but it is not necessarily effective in a military sense. Untrained or partly trained combatants sometimes do more harm than good. Though each of Hitler's four successive blitz attacks has slowed down or halted in a week or ten days, he continues on the whole to gain ground. Those who believe that General Winter may turn the tide for the Russians are quite possibly deceiving themselves like those who predicted that General Mud would win for Poland.

Will Russia make a separate peace? The chances seem overwhelmingly against it unless her armies are completely cut to pieces and her government, in a time of chaos, loses all authority. For years, preparations have been made to fight if necessary from successive lines farther to the East. As Hitler advances, his communications problem becomes steadily more serious. The bad roads and bad railroads of western Russia which have thus far been a liability to Stalin's forces then become a handicap to the Germans. The Russians now know that you can't make peace with Hitler any more than you can do business with him. He intends to destroy those whom he does not enslave. Russia will fight as long as she can; but she needs help on a large scale.

Britain and America have been shamefully slow in aiding the USSR during the four months of the war. If they will now enlarge their help, not merely double but ten times, there is still a good chance to keep an eastern front in being. But if they fail to increase their tempo, the outlook is black.

Stirrings of Life in the GOP

It is good news that some of the Republicans in Congress have broken away from the party line on foreign policy and that three members of the Senate are demanding outright repeal of the Neutrality Act. For decades there was an unwritten law that politics stopped at the water's edge; but recently, Republican leadership has violated this rule. It has appeared to be willing to gamble with our national safety in order to score a seeming, temporary, partisan advantage.

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Both the Republican and the Democratic Parties have liberal and conservative wings, possess genuine patriots and time-serving politicians. The Southern reactionaries are as great a handicap to the Democratic Party as is any comparable Northern group to the Republicans. It would be a refreshing novelty to have the Democrats given some real competition by the Republicans in the field of service to the American people as a whole. It is equally welcome to see some members of the GOP who are awake to our national emergency and are not afraid to say so.

Triumph and Beginning

The Argentine trade treaty is a genuine triumph for the State Department, particularly for Messrs. Hull and Welles, and Ambassador Norman Armour. A commercial agreement has been a long time on the way—the last one was made in 1853—and the way has been rough. The obstacles have been real. Argentina and the United States have, in point of fact, conflicting economic interests. About 96 percent of Argentina's exports are agricultural: corn, meat, wheat, linseed, wool, hides. The United States has a heavy surplus of most of those products. It has been no solution for Americans to suggest cheerfully that Argentina should "become industrialized." The Argentine is eager to increase its industrial productivity; but there are no coal, no iron, and little oil or potential water power. Argentina's natural wealth is in her magnificent black soil. No discussion of the problem is realistic that does not begin with that fact.

We have consistently sold more goods in the Argentine than we have been willing to buy there—$486,900,000 more during the fifteen-year interval 1924 through 1938. That, at bottom, is why the Argentine has been the coy, if not the downright unfriendly, power in Pan-American conferences. Our national interest makes it imperative that the United States and the Argentine reach a basis of friendly accord. The new treaty is an expression of the national interest of both countries. The United States will get tariff concessions on products the sale of which comes to about a third of the total of exports to Argentina. The Argentine will get tariff concessions on the products which amount to about 75 percent of her sales to the United States. On neither side is the amount of money involved by the changes large. The controversial question of imports of fresh meat has been sidestepped. It is a modest beginning but an important one.

Dies Irae

Mr. Dies is wrathful again. "The very grave danger exists," he wrote Attorney General Biddle last week, "that our government, by its aid to Russia on the eastern front, has opened up for Stalin a new western front right here in the capital of America." This dire warning was apropos a list of federal employees accused by the Representative of being Communists or fellow travelers. The list was drawn up after the Attorney General had asked Mr. Dies's committee for information on the membership of federal workers in "subversive" organizations.

We don't know what Mr. Biddle means to do with the list (the names on it were not made public), but a thorough sprinkling with salt might be the first step. Mr. Dies furiously opposes United States aid to Russia and seizes every chance to assure the nation that such aid will be America's undoing. Mr. Biddle gave him a very fine chance indeed, and the wonder is that Mr. Dies confined his list to a mere 1,124 names. Combating "subversion" is not now, if it ever has been, Mr. Dies's major concern. His real interest lies in stirring up opposition to the foreign policy of the United States.

The War Comes Closer

The realization that we are in fact at war came closer home with the ruling by the Supply, Priorities and Allocations Board forbidding any new public or private construction jobs which require "appreciable quantities" of building materials for which shortages exist, unless such projects are essential for defense or for the health and safety of the people. The decision was necessary. It was made necessary partly by just such poor planning as the Gano Dunn episode illustrates. (It is hoped that the policy of restricted construction will save 3,300,000 tons of badly needed steel.) And it is necessary because in war first things must come first or disaster follows. The first job is to lick Hitler.

In districts where defense-housing shortages exist, private home building will probably not be stopped. Elsewhere it will be. There is a triple challenge here for Americans: a challenge to our intelligence and ingenuity, in planning for the reëmployment of workers whose jobs will be hit by the ruling and in devising substitute building materials to take the place of those in which we are short; and a challenge to the courage of all Americans in steeling their wills to win safety for their country again. Comfort will have to come second until that task is completed.

The Guild Elects

The American Newspaper Guild's first election by national referendum resulted in a clean sweep for the anti-administration ticket. Milton M. Murray of The Detroit Times, the opposition's candidate for president, won a five-to-three victory over Donal M. Sullivan of Boston, the incumbent. Only in New York City did the administration fare well in an election in which the issue of Communist fellow-traveling was foremost.

There is little doubt that the primary cause of the administration's defeat was the repeated charge that it has hewn to the party line. There was evidence,

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especially in New York City, to support that charge, and the majority of the Guild's members clearly felt that they were cleaning house when they elected a new slate of officers. Quite apart from the party-line issue, a Guild housecleaning was in order. The administration's policies, whether Communist-inspired or not, have kept the membership in a state of turmoil. A split was developing that threatened to destroy the Guild's usefulness to the newspaper fraternity. In the circumstances the Guild needed a new set of officers, and it seems to have got a good one.

Honor to a Prophet

In the issue of May 22, 1932, The Paris Herald published an editorial declaring, "The hour has struck for a fascist party to be born in the United States. . . . Someone will give the signal." (The Paris Herald, owned by The New York Herald Tribune, was left free to follow its own fancies.) This editorial is an interesting document. Written while Herbert Hoover was President, it is based on the now familiar hate-Roosevelt theme: "Bills to appropriate millions for the aid of special classes or industries are tossed into the House of Representatives, at the moment when federal finances are strained to the breaking point. Congress has one plain duty, to balance the budget. . . ." And so on and so forth.

The writer of the editorial had not yet personalized his hatred. He was not aware that the leadership of the democratic government into which his American fascist party was to "put the fear of God" would be that of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Only two names of Americans were mentioned in the editorial, names of the two men who were considered most likely to "give the signal." One was Henry Ford. The other was Charles Lindbergh. It would be interesting also to be able to spend five minutes looking at the Haushofer archives, in the Institüt für Geopolitik in Berlin, under "The United States: L," to see if by any chance this shrewd prediction was noted by the people best able to profit from the tip.

Footnote

Senator Jim Murray of Montana published in The New Republic of October 20 a communication. In it he mentioned a speech made by Mayor Charlie Trott of Billings in introducing Senator Wheeler at an America First rally. Mayor Trott's speech was in wholehearted support of President Roosevelt and, naturally, it greatly upset the America First Committee. When Senator Wheeler got back to Washington, he released to the press a telegram from a citizen of Billings. "Billings humiliated by speech of foreign-born mayor," it read. "Understand report untrue that Mayor Trott is communist."

Mayor Trott is of course a loyal American, an outstanding figure in the political life of the Northwest. The man who sent this smearing telegram is an official of America First—a fact that Senator Wheeler failed to mention. The "denial" that the mayor of Billings is a communist makes just about as much sense as it would do for The New Republic to issue a denial that Senator Wheeler is on Adolf Hitler's personal payroll. What in the world has got into the Senator, anyhow? Surely he must realize that people just don't do such things.

Russia Also

You have probably already heard our Favorite Story of the Week, since it was broadcast by the BBC. But anyhow, we like it.

Two Germans, walking in the streets of Berlin, meet an attractively dressed woman and one of them remarks on the fact.

The other: "Why shouldn't she be well dressed? Gown from Paris, stockings from Belgium, shoes from Denmark, furs from Norway."

The first: "What, nothing from Russia?"

The other (grimly): "From Russia? Yes. Mourning veil from Russia."

Last Week

When a citizen of a country occupied by the German army takes action to assert the independence of his country he is shot for treason. The Germans wish to be loved but have talent for trying to get loyalty the hard way. Harold Denny's dispatches in The New York Times told last week how they are winning the adoration of the people of Greece. The method is to loot. They have done it openly, intensively and—a new note—in a disorderly and undisciplined fashion. . . . Air Associates, Inc., of Bendix, New Jersey, took the hard way of convincing their workmen, and the National Defense Mediation Board, of their good faith when they told the Board that they would be glad to reinstate workers immediately but that immediately meant thirty days later. . . . The country is "taking another long step in setting up precedents for unilateral compulsory arbitration of labor disputes," remarked the editorial writer of The New York Times, when the Board censured the company. What the world needs is an editorial writer who will establish a precedent of waiting thirty days before he uses the word "unilateral" when what he means is "one-sided."

Senator Clark of Missouri made a scathing attack on General Ben Lear, for retiring Major General Truman, former commander of the Thirty-fifth Division, as a result of the defeat of the Second Army in recent maneuvers. It may be purest coincidence, but General Truman is the cousin of Senator Truman, Senator Clark's colleague from Missouri. It may also be the ancient business of a politician making it hard for army commanders to get rid of subordinates who have connections.

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America in the World Crisis

THE ARGUMENT OF THE isolationists, that the United States can choose whether to join the world conflict, sounds grimly funny this week. Actually, the United States is at present the most important nation in the Second World War.

In Russia, the overwhelming question is whether the Soviet armies can continue to fight until aid from the United States begins to arrive in sufficient quantities to turn the tide of battle. In the North Atlantic Hitler has just taken the risk of trying to sink an American destroyer in his desperate effort to interfere with the flow of supplies from this country to Britain. On the other side of the earth, China is counting on our aid against the Japanese invader whom she has held at bay for so long with such an incredible paucity of modern weapons. No one of these countries opposed to Hitler could continue fighting very long without the aid from the United States that is now being extended or is contemplated. The war is pivoted at this moment upon this country. It is interesting to reflect that not one of the sincere American isolationists would wish to see our aid withdrawn.

We propose to beat no drums about the loss of eleven men from the Kearny. The plain fact is that we are already at war with Hitler in everything but name and that the attack on the Kearny is the sort of act of war that might have been expected even sooner and is bound to be repeated in the future. The New Republic has believed, and has said for some time past, that the United States ought to declare war on the Axis at once, for reasons which we have stated at great length. Perhaps the attack on the Kearny may help some laggard Americans to realize our national situation; it has already made doubly sure that Congress would pass the bill amending the Neutrality Act to permit American merchantmen to be armed.

Nowhere is the United States a more pivotal figure today than in the Far East. Whatever may be its pretenses, the new Japanese Cabinet is certainly intended to authorize striking either to the south or the north —and perhaps both—if things go badly enough for the Russians in the West. Any such actions depend entirely on our attitude. It may be true, as some commentators are saying, that Japan is more afraid of Germany than of anyone else, and is seeking a foothold in Siberia west of Vladivostok for strategic reasons. The Japanese ought to fear Hitler, since he intends to annihilate them. But it is hard to believe that the Japanese army really thinks it could make a better stand against a victorious German force in Siberia than it could on the shores of the Japanese archipelago.

From the point of view of the United States and our own interest, the problem is not very complicated. We have two dangerous and implacable enemies on the east and west, Japan and Germany. They are implacable not only because one of them hopes to rule half the world and the other the whole world but because our entire system of thought, our philosophy of life, is hostile to their doctrine of brute force as the only agency that counts. These two enemies are already working in concert: Japan provokes a crisis not only whenever the fortunes of war seem to go against the democracies, but also when it suits Hitler's book to have her do so.

There are two courses open for us in regard to these enemies. We can either wait meekly until they get ready to attack us jointly, or we can follow the common-sense procedure of disposing of the weaker of the two first so that we shall be better prepared to meet the threat of the other, if and when it comes.

This does not necessarily or even probably mean an immediate shooting war with Japan. You sometimes hear people say that we should speak softly to Japan because we don't have a two-ocean navy. But we *do* have a two-ocean navy at the present moment, half of it under the British flag. How long we will have it, in view of present circumstances, no one can say, which is another reason for acting fast.

Our national policy, made partly by President Roosevelt, partly by officials of the State Department and to some extent by prevailing opinion in Congress, has been that the longer we could postpone trouble in any part of the world, the better. If you think of the United States as a half-armed nation hurrying to catch up, this is perhaps wise. But if you think of us as a nation which now has allies but cannot be sure of the future, such an attitude may be the worst kind of folly. After all, Japan and Germany are also continuing to arm themselves, and in some ways they are doing better than we.

The day is now past, in our judgment, when mere threats to suspend trade relations with Japan are enough to have any effect, especially since almost every action taken is subsequently watered down by series of exceptions made for individual traders who want to go on doing business. We believe that Great Britain and the United States should immediately threaten Japan with a shooting war unless she instantly and completely comes over to the side of the democracies, gets out of China and Indo-China and gives effective guarantees against any further aggression. Highly competent naval authorities believe that such a war would end in a quick Japanese defeat, which incidentally would result in making available to the democracies millions of tons of badly needed Japanese merchant ships. But it is far more likely that the threat of war would not need to be made good. Japanese policy has been based on the contemptuous assumption that we are timorous, vacillating and decadent. If we would show them that this notion is wrong, their policy might be changed overnight.

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It is possible, nevertheless, that such a declaration might have to be made good by force, and it is time the American people should brace themselves for the probability of armed conflict. For many years The New Republic has argued for settling international disputes by other methods than force. But today we are not confronted by any international dispute, but by an international menace. Many Americans are like a man who sits in the living-room of a house where the kitchen is on fire and refuses to put out the blaze on the ground that it hasn't reached him yet and anyhow he dislikes heat and confusion. If we look back over the last two or three years, we can see one occasion after another where American irresolution or negation has resulted in a triumphant victory for Hitler and his allies. The sands of time are running out; we cannot much longer fail to act without inviting disaster.

Books and the War

IN LITERATURE just as in politics, there are curious parallels between the First World War and the Second. History does not repeat itself, but it has to work with second-hand materials, there being no others. Literature is always changing, but often in two different periods it expresses the same ideas and emotions in almost the same forms.

Take, for example, the literature of social protest, dealing chiefly with the abuses of capitalism and the struggle for justice of the working masses. It flourished during the years that preceded both wars. Jack London, Robert Herrick and the muckrakers had their more recent counterparts in John Dos Passos, James Farrell and all the proletarian novelists. Upton Sinclair came back into popularity simply by continuing to say what he had always said. The best-selling novel of 1915 was "A Far Country," by the other Winston Churchill; its subject was the evils of monopoly capitalism. Not much less popular, and more widely discussed, was "The Harbor," by Ernest Poole, which told the story of a strike on the New York waterfront. No other strike novel reached the best-seller lists until 1939, when John Steinbeck published "The Grapes of Wrath."

But social protest began to die away as the country moved nearer to both wars. In 1916-17 there were complaints not only against the Socialist writers but against all naturalistic novels, on the ground that they destroyed our faith in America and hence weakened our will to resist. Dreiser, London and Herrick were condemned in almost the same words that would later be applied to Dos Passos and Hemingway.

There was a renewed interest in religion during the last war and even H. G. Wells was affected by it; in 1917 he wrote "The Soul of a Bishop" and "God, the Invisible King." The same sort of revival now seems to be getting under way, and on a wider scale. Lewis Mumford's "Faith for Living" is an exhortation to kneel and repent; Aldous Huxley's "Grey Eminence" is a treatise on mysticism; Waldo Frank's "Chart for Rough Water" and W. H. Auden's "The Double Man" are both in essence works of theology. It is true that these books appeal chiefly to intellectuals, but the same type of interest is felt by the public at large. To prove as much, there is A. J. Cronin's "The Keys of the Kingdom," now standing first on almost all the lists of popular fiction.

First in non-fiction, and outselling every novel, is William L. Shirer's "Berlin Diary." Its success proves again what everybody knew already: that the most absorbing of all subjects to the American public in wartime is the war itself. That was also the case in 1917.

There is of course a difference between the war books of the two periods. In 1917 they were likely to be narratives of personal heroism and hoorah, like Sergeant Arthur Guy Empey's "Over the Top." In 1941 they are a great deal more sophisticated, like the public that reads them. Comparatively few deal with the actual fighting, perhaps for the reason that there has so far been less of it—except in Russia, where no English or American writers have stood on the firing line. More of them describe the sufferings of civilians or try to draw the grand outlines of strategy. Publishers in skeptical moods have been known to divide their war books into three categories: the I-seen-it-happens, the Hitler-can't-wins and the wake-up-Americas. Books of all three types are more successful today than the let's-stay-out-of-its, which had a mild vogue two years ago. No matter what happens on the floor of the Senate, the isolationists have lost the battle on the literary front, just as they did in the last war.

What will be the next step? Will American literature continue to follow the same course as in 1917, proceeding through an era of Hun-hating sermons and romantic stories about our boys in the trenches toward a sharp and sudden disillusionment? Will this be followed by another era of cynicism, withdrawal and expatriation? That would be a dangerous and probably a false prophecy. It would be taking for granted another easy triumph—easy, that is, for the Americans, who sometimes picture themselves as galloping on the scene like a troop of movie cowboys, to save democracy from worse than death. This time the story won't have such a happy ending. Whether or not our army ever faces the Germans—and in our hearts we know that it must—this war will end by affecting us far more profoundly than the last. After it is over, there may be no time for cynicism, no money to support pure art and no pleasant French cafés where writers can expatriate themselves.

As for the post-war disillusionment, it has taken place already, and that is perhaps the most disturbing

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feature of our own age in American letters. The young writers of the other war retained their faith in social progress until after the Treaty of Versailles and the defeat of the labor movement at home; it was only after 1920 that they began expressing a contempt for society and an admiration for art-in-itself. But the young writers of today have been following a different schedule. Caught up in the social movements of the 1930's, they regarded the depression as *their* war, and they looked forward to victory when this country should follow the example of Russia. Instead they were presented with the Moscow trials and the Russo-German pact, the equivalent in their lives of the Palmer raids and the Treaty of Versailles.

The result has been that many of them—especially those who like to think of themselves as the advance guard—have turned away from social movements of every sort, and admit to nothing but a spectator's mild interest in the fate of the world. Among writers of the previous generation, they admire only Franz Kafka as a novelist and Rainer Maria Rilke as a poet, quoting them in the same tones that the expatriates used when speaking of Eliot and Joyce. Their little magazines and their little-read anthologies publish Dadaist stories and Surrealist poems that might have been written in 1923. They are trying to create a post-war literature in the midst of a pre-war crisis, and the attempt can scarcely lead to success.

British Taxes and Ours

THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE of the United States has announced that "the tax burden in the United States is greater than that in Great Britain, whether measured on a per-capita basis or as a percentage of national income." There have been disputes about this question in the past and the Chamber's confident assertion was received by most of the daily press, as by Newsweek and Time, with obeisances. The answer pleased the isolationists, who say we are spending too much money to help Britain; it pleased the public at large, which, being human, enjoys being told that its taxes are too high; and it gave to certain other groups that most delightful of all sensations, the feel of a club in their hands with which to take a whack at the Roosevelt administration. It is too bad to spoil all this pleasure; but a look at the Chamber's figures shows that they were juggled.

The Chamber estimated that federal, state and local taxes in the United States this year will be about $22,500,000,000, or $168 per person. It compares this with the $165-per-person tax in Great Britain. It then figures that if our national income is $90,000,000,000, taxes will be taking 25 percent of it, as contrasted with 22 percent of an estimated $36,000,000,000 national income in Great Britain.

Here are some of the errors which the Chamber made in its calculations: 1. It forgot to include England's social-security taxes; it did not forget to include ours. 2. The $36,000,000,000, which it used as the British national income is gross income. The $90,000,000,000 for United States income is net. (Most economists, incidentally, expect our national income to approach $100,000,000,000 this year.) Britain's income was $22,400,000,000 in 1940, on the authority of the English Central Statistical Office. Dr. Brinley Thomas, of the British Embassy in Washington, estimates that the income for the current fiscal year will be about $27,000,000,000. British taxes for this year will be about 29 percent of income, not 22 percent. 3. The United States is coming nearer to paying for its war effort out of taxation; the British are depending more heavily on borrowing. Britain's prospective tax rate is higher. 4. Britain has dipped into savings. In the first year and a half of the war, the British used about $4,000,000,000 of overseas capital. In the final analysis that is taxation too. 5. The Chamber took no account of ships and cities destroyed by German bombs. Taxation to replace them will also be part of the "war burden." 6. In figuring British total income, the Chamber forgot to deduct corporation and excess-profits taxes. It deducted these in figuring American income. 7. In figuring per-capita taxes, the Chamber forgot that a far higher proportion of British people are in the armed forces, and most of them are not taxpayers. It is fallacious merely to compare the total populations of the two countries. 8. The financial burden on a people at war is greatly increased by measures of rationing and other restrictions on the consumer. There is no way in which this important factor can be included in the comparison.

The conclusion is that it is impossible to make a dependable statistical comparison of the "tax burden" of the two nations. A note of merely negative warning would seem to be useful, however, in view of the positiveness of the many sermons preached on the Chamber's garbled text.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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War Profits

I. *The Case of Steel*

THE RECORD HIGH in tax payments was made by the U. S. Steel Corporation during the First World War. In 1917 U. S. Steel paid taxes—mostly federal excess-profits taxes—of no less than $252,000,000. In 1918, the corporation's tax bill came to $297,000,000. For the two war years the total tax was $549,000,000. It amounted to more than twenty cents on every dollar the corporation took in.

It is perhaps not necessary to add that record taxes did not keep U. S. Steel from making a record profit. In 1917, even after the tax payments, the company made $224,000,000. In 1918, with war taxes in effect for the full year, the profit-after-taxes was down to $125,000,000. U. S. Steel had a comfortable nest-egg of $349,000,000 for the war period, but out of every $5 made on a before-tax basis, about $3 went to satisfy the tax-collector's demands. Mainly these taxes were federal income taxes, paid on excess profits.

In 1940, U. S. Steel made a net income of $102,200,000 *after* paying all taxes, federal taxes included. The 1940 profit was $61,000,000 greater than the 1939 profit. It was also $58,000,000 greater than the average profit for the years 1936-39. The average profit for these years is the profit which Congress has accepted as the "normal" one which a company may make before it becomes subject to the excess-profits tax. But U. S. Steel's federal income-tax bill was only $26,500,000[1], and the corporation was not liable to any excess-profits tax whatsoever. By calculating its normal profit on the basis of the return on its invested capital, the company got such a big excess-profit-tax exemption that it could have made several more million dollars without getting seriously into the excess-profits-tax zone. The return-on-invested-capital method of figuring excess profits may, in general, be a better money-raiser than the average-earnings method[2]. But in any heavily capitalized industry (such as the steel industry), corporations may double or triple their usual profits without paying any special taxes on their extra (or excessive) gains. As we shall see in a moment, the excess-profits tax—even in its present unsatisfactory form—does restrict profits after they have reached an extremely high point. But a steel company has to be almost bursting with prosperity before the excess-profits-tax collector knocks at its door.

There are many steel companies in the United States, but eight of them account for about 80 percent of the national capacity. U. S. Steel, with a capacity of 29,000,000 tons of steel per year, has a little more than one-third of the industry's total capacity. Bethlehem, which can turn out about 13,000,000 tons per year, has a little less than one-sixth of the total capacity.

Six major independents (Republic, Jones and Laughlin, Youngstown, National, Inland and American Rolling Mill) have a combined capacity of about 25,000,000 tons a year, something less than one-third of the total capacity.

Since the entire steel industry can now produce about 84,000,000 tons per year, these eight companies—with a combined capacity of 67,000,000 tons—operate almost exactly four-fifths of our steel-making plant. Their condition reflects that of steel as a whole.

In 1939 these eight companies made, after taxes and all charges, a profit of $112,100,000. If, with Congress, we take their normal profit as their average profit in the 1936-1939 (four-year) period, we find that it is $102,000,000 a year. But the 1939 earnings are very close to this normal and also stand as the most recent example of steel earnings in a world at peace.

In 1940, the same eight companies, after taxes and all other charges, made $230,000,000. They more than doubled their 1939 profits as the national steel output jumped from 52,700,000 tons to 67,100,000 tons. The first war year brought them a $118,000,000 profit increase in which three companies out of six[1] made more money than they had made in 1929. The following table shows, in millions of dollars, the 1939 and the 1940 net incomes of the eight concerns:

	1939	1940
U. S. Steel	$ 41.1	$102.2
Bethlehem Steel	24.6	48.7
Republic Steel	10.7	21.1
National Steel	12.6	15.1
Inland Steel	10.9	14.4
Youngstown Sheet and Tube	5.0	10.8
Jones and Laughlin Steel	3.2	10.3
American Rolling Mill	4.0	7.6
Total	112.1	230.2

[1] Total 1940 taxes were $85,000,000, but the $55,800,000 of taxes that were *not* federal income taxes had nothing to do with the war or with war profits.

[2] The United States Treasury prefers the invested-capital method, and it should know which method yields the greater revenue. Manufacturers of cigarettes, soap, cosmetics, beverages, packaged foods, automobiles and other consumer products would, in most cases, pay a higher tax if they paid on profits in excess of eight percent on their investment. But it seems to me more logical that an excess-profits tax should begin with the excess profits, and not come into operation only after a distinctly high return on capital has been reached.

[1] National Steel was organized in November, 1929; Republic Steel (in its present incorporation) in April, 1930. Bethlehem, Inland and American Rolling Mill exceeded their 1929 nets by considerable margins.

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Yet most of these companies, by using the invested-capital method of computing taxes, made little or no contribution to the excess-profits tax. Bethlehem, with a big profit increase, paid an excess-profits tax of $5,200,000. National, with a relatively small capital investment, paid $2,000,000. The others did not break down their federal income-tax payments into a normal and (if any) an excess-profits tax. But their excess-profits exemptions were so big and their total federal income-tax payments so small that the United States Treasury could hardly have collected from them more than their normal taxes levied at the ordinary corporate income-tax rate.

Thus far in 1941, the steel industry has been running at capacity—and sometimes at better than capacity—levels[1]. If, as seems likely, the 1941 output equals the 1941 capacity (84,000,000 tons), the current year will see a 17,000,000-ton increase over 1940. Profits before taxes will be very much higher, and even on a profits-after-taxes basis the first half of 1941 showed a decided gain over corresponding profits for the first half of 1940. But remember that the second half of 1940 was much better than the first half, whereas nothing but a price-increase can make the second half of the present year any better than the first. Furthermore, the profits-before-taxes have gone so high that they have finally come into violent collision with the excess-profits tax, and both the normal and the excess-profits-tax rates are higher than they were a year ago. (The normal is up from 24 percent to 31 percent; the excess profits from 50 percent to 60 percent.) The industry should show a large increase over its 1940 profits, but the rate of profit increase has definitely slowed down.

With this warning, the first-half figures for the eight leaders are shown in the following table:

Net Incomes	First half 1940	First half 1941
U. S. Steel	$ 36.3	$ 61.4
Bethlehem Steel	21.7	16.1
Republic Steel	6.4	13.6
National Steel	7.0	9.7
Youngstown Sheet and Tube	2.4	9.3
American Rolling Mill	2.1	6.7
Inland Steel	5.9	7.6
Jones and Laughlin, 3 mos. only	1.1	4.1
Total	$ 82.9	128.5

All the companies except Bethlehem made more money in the first half of 1941 than in the first half of 1940. The total increase—$45,600,000—was about a 55-percent increase over 1940's first six months. But the profits for the *first* half of *this* year were a little less than the profits for the *second* half of *last* year. And—until new capacity now under construction comes into action—the profits of the eight companies would seem to be stabilized at from $255,000,000 to $260,000,000 a year.

True, this figure is certainly robust. It is almost two and one-half times the 1939 profit and it is more than two and one-half times the 1936-39 average profit. All the stockholders will get regular dividends and all the executives will get bonuses, or possibly salary increases, as executive bonuses have not yet recovered from the black eye that the depression gave them. But 1941 profits do not figure to run much more than 10 percent over 1940 profits and 1941 profits should not be much exceeded in 1942.

This situation results, as I have suggested, from the fact that current profits, on a before-federal-income-tax basis, are so high that they have (for the first time) moved into the excess-profits-tax zone. It results also from the increased income-tax rates. Consider, for example, the experience of U. S. Steel in the first half of 1940 and in the first half of 1941.

U. S. Steel reported a net income of $36,300,000 for the first six months of 1940. But this figure represented U. S. Steel's profit after taxes—that is, after making provisions for the taxes that U. S. Steel expected to pay on its first-half income. And for this six months' period, U. S. Steel set aside $7,250,000 against the day when the tax-collector should turn up. So, on a before-tax basis, U. S. Steel's profit for the half year was $43,550,000—the sum of the net income reported plus the reserve for taxes. There was no provision for excess-profits taxes, as first-half 1940 earnings were far below the danger mark in this respect.

For the first half of 1941, U. S. Steel reported a net income—a profit after taxes—of $61,400,000. But during this same period, U. S. Steel had been allowing for income taxes in a really big way. It set aside $53,000,000 to provide for the taxes which it expected to pay on its first-half income. Before figuring tax bills, U. S. Steel must have had a first-half profit of $61,400,000 plus $53,000,000, or $114,400,000 in all.

We have just seen that the before-tax profit in the first half of 1940 was $43,550,000. So, on a before-tax basis, U. S. Steel made $70,900,000 more in the first six months of 1941 than in the first six months of 1940. But it also allowed $45,750,000 more for tax payments. Therefore its net income was only $25,150,000 more in the first half of 1941 than in the first half of 1940, despite a very much larger increase in the income before tax reserves were established.

It is of course possible that U. S. Steel has overestimated its tax payments. Corporations have been known to pad tax estimates to avoid the appearance of oversized profits. No outsider can check figures of this sort, and even insiders have frequently disagreed with Treasury officials over the question of how much the

[1] Estimates of theoretical capacity make a generous allowance for interruptions caused by holidays and by shutdowns for repairs. These interruptions seem to have been notably reduced. And some equipment, marked off as obsolete, has no doubt been given a new lease on life. So, despite arithmetic, a company may operate at 104 percent or 105 percent of capacity for a considerable period.

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corporation owes the government. But, at the present rate of profit, U. S. Steel will clear, before income-tax payments, nearly $230,000,000 for the twelve months of 1941. On such earnings, I should say that the federal income tax (normal plus excess profit) would come to something in the neighborhood of $110,000,000. At $53,000,000 a half-year, the company is putting aside $106,000,000 with which to pay the tax. Even if my guess is not very good, it does not appear that U. S. Steel has made too generous an estimate of the income tax for which the government will eventually present its bill.

Meanwhile, the other steel companies have also made large allowances for coming taxes (Bethlehem's reserve was $25,000,000 for the half-year), and even on the invested-capital basis, the industry will soon be making a sizable contribution to the defense fund. Remember, however, that after all tax payments, the eight leading steel companies should be making 2.3 times as much net income as they made in the last year of peace and 2.5 times as much as they made on their 1936-39 averages.

It is as if Congress said to the steel companies: "We are going to stick you with such heavy war taxes that from now on you can only make about 250 per cent of the amount that we have decided is your normal profit."

To which kindliness the steel man's response is perhaps best illustrated by a recent sorrowful statement by H. E. Lewis, board chairman of Jones and Laughlin. Said Mr. Lewis: "Taxes in the future will tend to become still more burdensome with the inevitable increase in federal income and excess-profits tax."

E. D. KENNEDY

Pappy Passes the Biscuits

AT MIDNIGHT last August 5, Wilbert Lee O'Daniel stood in his pajamas on the station platform at Beaumont, Texas. He made his last speech as Governor of Texas and climbed back into his berth on the train carrying him to Washington.

It is said that as he spoke, Tom Connally, Texas' senior Senator, was imploring Chesley W. Jurney, the sergeant-at-arms of the Senate, to place "Keep off the grass" signs on every inch of Capitol lawn. Mr. Connally is said to have warned Jurney that without the signs the lawn would not survive long after the arrival of the junior Senator.

Senator Connally had good reason to fear for the lawns. There once was a no less beautiful lawn around the eighty-eight-year-old Capitol at Austin. But the climax of Pappy's second inaugural as Governor was an all-night barbecue. For days before the inauguration, goats, pigs and calves arrived in Austin for the slaughter. One poor buffalo was even sent, and lived miserably in a small pen until Pappy put on his hunting clothes, went out to the pen and with a high-powered rifle slew it with a single bullet at five yards' range. Then the lawn was dug up for barbecue pits and for two days the smell of roasting meat hung over Austin. Twenty-two thousand people feasted at the barbecue, including "Spear," the new member of the Barbershop Commission who was appointed because he was the only barber in Austin who would shave Pappy free of charge. They ate and sang, and respectable citizens of Austin looked away, speaking in undertones of "the rabble of low degree."

When Pappy arrived in Washington he went straightaway to the White House to call on the President. The President, he was told, was away on a fishing trip. Crestfallen, Pappy told the people of Texas in his weekly recorded broadcast that the President had apparently left town because he was afraid of meeting Pappy. It was only when the records were being rushed back to fifteen Texas radio stations that Pappy learned to his dismay that the President had left Washington not only to avoid him, but to meet Winston Churchill.

When the President returned, Pappy went to see him and they got on splendidly. "His appearance and actions," Pappy said in his next broadcast, "conveyed the impression that he was master of the situation. In other words, his facial expression and demeanor portrayed the same confidence that Grandma used to show when I was a boy playing checkers with her, just before she jumped four or five of my men and got into the king row."

Soon after his White House visit, Pappy joined the pilgrimage to the ranch home of George Washington at Mount Vernon. On the way back he went to a restaurant and asked for a rush order of ham and eggs. "I wish you could have seen the expression which registered on the waitress' face," he said in his third broadcast back home. "She looked at me like she thought I had lost my mind and said, 'We have some fine broiled ham, Sir, but we do not serve EGGS.' Now folks, think of that! An eating place without EGGS! . . . Well I was too hungry to give up my place at the table so I had to eat ham without EGGS for the first time in my life. . . . I have told you folks about how funny things are up here, but whoever heard of boycotting the lowly HEN? What harm has the HEN done? I have been feeling sorry for the Horse, then the Cow, and now I am feeling sorry for the HEN. I am so hungry for a feast of good old fried EGGS that I wish some of my farmer friends in Texas would send me a dozen EGGS. I want to eat them here in Washington and I don't mind if

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I decorate my necktie a little with them and I might walk down the avenue thus advertising TEXAS EGGS by the yellow spots on my necktie."

Sure enough, Pappy's farmer friends came through. "There's one thing I want to say right here at the opening of this program," Pappy said at his fourth broadcast: "And that is how much I appreciate the many dozens of fine, big TEXAS HEN'S EGGS which our friends down there have sent us. Now maybe you think I haven't been feasting on these eggs—Yes-Sir-ee! I'm not eating the ham without the EGGS these days!"

A. THINN

Surrounded by thousands of Texas EGGS, Pappy still felt restless and homesick. His broadcast record of September 7 is a masterpiece of nostalgia. It begins with a rendering of "Home Sweet Home" by the Hillbilly Boys and the Texas Songbird. Then "We are the lostest folks you ever saw, up here in this big city, living in hotel rooms," says Pappy wistfully. "There's no driveway to drive into . . . no garage with kiddie cars or bicycles laying in the way to get out and move. . . . No beans and ham and apple-pie fragrant odors wafting in through the kitchen door . . . no Pat and Mike and Molly with their problems and plans and laughter . . . just a hotel room on the fifth floor. Now, folks, my work keeps me so busy that I don't have time to notice all this so much . . . it's the Missus that it's telling on . . . she keeps talking about the house where she can have another canary bird . . . if you recall little Jerry, the canary who lived with us for thirteen years, and almost all the time we were in the Governor's Mansion at Austin, is buried on the Mansion grounds. Then she always had her goldfish—something happened to them all, but she still has her fish bowl—I guess they all drowned when they found out we were moving from Texas."

To cheer up the Missus, Pappy took her to the movies. But "as soon as we got in and were seated," Pappy says on the broadcast, "the orchestra began to softly play 'Home on the Range.' . . . I looked over at her but she had her face covered with her handkerchief."—(Pappy's breaking voice is interrupted by soft voices of the Texas Songbird and the Hillbilly Boys in "Home on the Range.") "Yes, when that song was over," Pappy continues, "the newsreel of the war flashed on the screen . . . one soldier looked a lot like our son Pat . . . she could see no more of that newsreel." (The Texas Songbird and the Hillbilly Boys break in with "Just Before the Battle, Mother.") "Then the feature came on—'Life Begins for Andy Hardy,'" but Andy Hardy grew up during the film, and that reminded them of another son, Mike. (The Texas Songbird and the Hillbilly Boys come in with "Old Folks at Home.")

But after the showers the sun breaks through. Pappy catches the sob in his throat and cries, "I'm going to ask the Texas Songbird and some of the rest of them to say what is uppermost in their hearts right now." (The Texas Songbird and the Hillbilly Boys strike up Pappy's own song, "Beautiful Texas!")

The first unwritten rule of the Senate is that no Senator shall speak for two months after his induction. Sure enough, Pappy arose on his second day in the Senate. "The war now raging is terrible and must have consideration," he told the Senate, "but the thing of which I speak is even as great a menace, if not greater than the threat of war." It was the dictatorship of the "powerful, dominating . . . bloodsucking, money-minded . . . power-crazed, wild-eyed labor racketeers." He wound up by introducing a bill to outlaw closed-shop contracts. It received rather unkind treatment, however, and Pappy was forced to withdraw the bill and reintroduce a resolution providing for a constitutional amendment. The amendment guaranteed "freedom to work." "Freedom to work," as Pappy explained to me when I went to see him, "once you have a job."

In Pappy's outer office, Pappy's secretary had fastened his eyes upon mine. "The Senator will see you," he said. "But let me tell you this. He don't always cotton onto newspapermen. Down in Austin they were rough on him and he don't forget easy. But you play along with Pappy, and he'll play along with you, see. He can give you plenty of news. He *makes* news."

When I met him, Pappy didn't look at all as I had expected. He was totally unlike, for example, Huey Long, who had a conspicuous sentimental streak. In spite of the broadcasts I have quoted, Pappy seemed without sentiment. His shifty eyes and nervous hands were like those found among people with an abnormal fear of persecution. He should not be taken lightly; when he seems to play the clown he is in fact suiting himself, with astonishing skill, to the tastes of a large section of the American people. He has real power and great ambition, and he will make news. I left him uneasy and glad that he lacks Huey's genius for organizing.

Pappy will attempt to pass a great many biscuits to the American people in the next six years. The people, if they are smart, will pass the biscuits right back to Pappy.

Washington MICHAEL STRAIGHT

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Racketeers and Movie Magnates

ENJOYING public favor as a result of the current Wheeler-Nye investigation of the film industry, the major producers are, at the moment, covering up in grand style in the trial of Willie Bioff and George Browne, bosses of the powerful International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees, in New York. To understand the complex developments leading up to the indictment of Bioff and Browne, on charges of collecting $550,000 from four moving-picture companies on threat of strike action, and the role of the producers in the story, one must go back a few years.

In 1937 about a hundred members of one of the IATSE locals in Hollywood (Local 37) came to see me in my law office in Los Angeles. They told me an almost incredible tale. For more than two years there had been no membership meetings of the Hollywood locals of the IATSE; the autonomy of the locals had been suspended and their affairs were being conducted by Willie Bioff, late of Chicago. During this same period, they had been forced to pay an assessment of two percent on their total weekly earnings in the studios. The fund collected by this assessment was, by the terms of the resolution levying it, turned over to George E. Browne, president of the IATSE, to spend as he saw fit.

How did it happen that this pair from Chicago had come to dominate the affairs of 12,000 motion-picture workers? In 1933 the IATSE locals had been involved in a ruinous jurisdictional strike in Hollywood, as a result of which they had been thoroughly smashed thanks largely to the skillful exertions of Pat Casey of the Motion Picture Producers' Association. No longer parties to the so-called "basic agreement," the IATSE locals had virtually ceased to exist. (Under the provisions of the "basic agreement," the Motion Picture Producers' Association negotiates with the "international representatives" of the various unions—never with committees selected by the rank and file.) In 1936, the IATSE—with a paid-up membership at the time of exactly thirty-three individuals—was suddenly and mysteriously made a party, once again, to the basic agreement, and a closed-shop agreement was signed with the various studios. Twelve thousand studio workers were amazed to report to work and find notices posted on the bulletin boards advising them that membership in the IATSE was a first condition of employment. Overnight the membership of the union in Hollywood jumped from 33 members to 12,000. The workers, of course, had had nothing whatever to say about the terms of the agreement which had been negotiated in their name by Messrs. Browne and Bioff.

Why had the producers suddenly decided to deal with the IATSE? For years the story was current in Hollywood that George Browne had given the producers a fearful tongue-lashing in New York and that, of a sudden, they had capitulated. Nicholas Schenck, in the current New York trial, has explained the matter by saying that the studios were afraid of the power of Browne and Bioff over the projectionists' locals of the IATSE. There is, however, another explanation: at the time the IATSE was made a party to the basic agreement, the autonomy of the Hollywood locals had been suspended. The producers, therefore, did not have to deal with the membership, but with Browne and Bioff, who, even at that date, had begun to receive pay-offs from them.

I suggested to the group of rank-and-filers who consulted me in 1937 that they should bring a law suit to have the autonomy of the locals restored and to force an accounting of the two-percent assessment. Two courageous prop-makers volunteered to sign the complaint, in the face of my warnings that they would be instantly discharged by their employers. Both of these men were old-time prop-makers, one having worked in the industry since 1920. Within a week after the suit was filed, they were both discharged by their employer, Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, and it was several years before either could get a job in the industry. Realizing the hopeless disparity of power between the handful of men I represented and the combined power of the studios and the IATSE, I proposed to certain members of the California legislature that the Assembly Committee on Capital and Labor investigate the IATSE.

To these members, I gave documentary proof of the following facts: That Bioff had a long-time criminal record in Chicago; that Chicago newspapers had repeatedly referred to him, in front-page stories, as a well known hoodlum and gangster and former member of the Capone mob; and that he had been arrested and questioned in connection with at least two murders in Chicago—the victims in each instance being trade unionists who had attempted to challenge the control which Browne and Bioff exercised over the Chicago locals of the union. Browne and Bioff had taken over undisputed leadership of these locals and, by this means, had strong-armed their way into the national organization.

Eventually the assembly committee decided to investigate the IATSE, and public hearings opened in Los Angeles on November 12, 1937. We inundated the committee with definite proof of the intimidation of IATSE members by their "officials" and of the col-

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lusive understanding between the producers and Messrs. Browne and Bioff. One of my clients, for example, had paid one instalment of the two-percent assessment under protest, stating that he intended to contest the legality of the assessment. The next day Willie Bioff phoned an executive at Warner Brothers Studio and told him to fire my client because he was a "trouble-maker." The discharge, needless to say, was promptly effected. This fact was testified to, not only by my client, but by the particular official at Warner Brothers.

The situation was, in fact, unbeatable: you could not work in the studios, in any of the classifications within the IATSE jurisdiction, without joining that organization; and, if you believed in trade-union democracy, you were promptly discharged by your employer. Browne and Bioff policed the 12,000 members of the IATSE for the producers and the producers policed the same members for Willie and George. It was because of this collusive understanding that Browne and Bioff were able to collect, under the two-percent assessment, upwards of $2,000,000 for which they never accounted to the membership.

To my amazement, however, the assembly committee investigation began to disintegrate. The members of this committee refused point-blank to question Bioff about his criminal record in Chicago. Despite the fact that the committee was being flooded with letters (mostly anonymous) from studio workers giving verifiable details of intimidation by IATSE goons, the investigation suddenly terminated. During the course of the investigation, a prominent Democratic politician in Los Angeles told me that mysterious forces had been at work behind the scenes, but I gave little credence to the story at the time. About a year later, however, the district attorney of Sacramento County began an investigation of legislative corruption in California. During this investigation, the fact was developed that two days before the assembly-committee hearings opened in Los Angeles the IATSE had given Colonel William Neblett (a law partner of former Senator William Gibbs McAdoo) a $5,000 retainer; that Colonel Neblett was associated, in the practice of the law, with William Mosely Jones, speaker of the assembly; and that the investigators for the assembly committee had been employees of Colonel Neblett. These facts —which are fully developed and commented upon in the famous Philbrick Report (an official California state document, "Legislative Investigative Report, H. R. Philbrick, December 28, 1938," pp. 25-39)— seemed to throw light on why the assembly-committee investigation was a disappointment.

But the story has other complications. In searching for bank accounts in the name of William Bioff, the investigators for the district attorney of Sacramento County discovered that Bioff had deposited $100,000 in a Los Angeles bank in the summer of 1937 and had withdrawn this sum in cash two days later. Upon questioning Bioff, they found that this sum had been paid to him by a nephew of Joseph Schenck. As soon as this fact was established, I filed a formal complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, charging the IATSE with being a company-dominated union. Despite the most strenuous efforts on our part, however, we could not get an early hearing on these important and well documented charges. Every conceivable obstacle was placed in the way of an open hearing. In an effort to placate the IATSE membership, Bioff lifted the two-percent assessment and restored a measure of autonomy to the Hollywood locals. Since it was apparent that we would never get a hearing on the charges filed with the board, we finally consented to withdraw the charges upon condition that a consent-election be held to determine whether the members wanted to remain in the IATSE or to join the United Studio Technicians' Guild. Although the subsequent election was close, the IATSE got a majority of the votes cast. Most of the workers were badly demoralized and feared that Browne and Bioff would, through their control of the projectionists' locals, whip them into line in the long run regardless of the outcome of the election.

Almost immediately afterwards, however, Browne and Bioff began to carve up the jurisdiction of the Hollywood locals in such a way that it became almost impossible for the rank and file to make their demands effective. While all this fighting was going on in Hollywood, one of my clients, a very determined prop-maker named Irwin Hentschel, attended a convention of the IATSE in Cleveland. There he attempted to tell the other delegates about the intimidation of the Hollywood locals. Hentschel was mercilessly slugged and beaten in a Cleveland hotel room and his complaints to the local police were ignored. In the meantime, however, we had induced the Treasury Department to investigate the $100,000 transaction. They soon discovered that Bioff had neglected to report the transaction in his income-tax return and that Mr. Schenck, when questioned about the item, developed an extraordinary vagueness, and seemed undecided as to whether the $100,000 represented a loan, a gift, or payment for services rendered. The result of this investigation was the subsequent indictment of Schenck and Bioff for income-tax evasion.

During the course of this free-for-all, I happened to meet Westbrook Pegler in the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. We spent an afternoon discussing the strange careers of Messrs. Browne and Bioff. Later Mr. Pegler launched a vigorous campaign against the two IATSE officials and discovered, in the course of his investigation, that Bioff had failed to serve an old six-months sentence for pandering in Chicago. After weeks of heckling, Mr. Pegler finally induced the au-

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thorities to issue a warrant of extradition, and Willie had to serve a term in jail. Also, some of the St. Louis henchmen of Browne and Bioff were rounded up about this time and placed on trial for various trade-union irregularities in that city. In the course of his ardent campaign against Messrs. Browne and Bioff, however, Mr. Pegler never mentioned the fact that had it not been for the courageous action of a half-dozen Hollywood trade unionists, the conduct of the IATSE would never have been brought to light. Incidentally, some of these trade unionists are still walking the streets in Hollywood, as they have been systematically blacklisted in every studio in the industry.

In the current trial in New York, Nicholas Schenck has testified that, since 1936, Messrs. Browne and Bioff have collected more than $500,000 from the motion-picture producers. In explaining how it came about that he, an executive of a great and powerful corporation, should have so easily succumbed to the threats of two well known gangsters, Mr. Schenck states that he feared these men might, through their control of the projectionists' locals, "ruin the industry."

The reason the Motion Picture Producers "paid off" is obvious: they wanted the 12,000 members of the IATSE in Hollywood held in check, and Browne and Bioff were just the men to handle this assignment. Had the producers not "paid off" to Willie and George, even to the tune of $500,000, they might have had to pay ten times that amount in wage adjustments.

It was the producers themselves, as Nicholas Schenck admits, who suggested that the IATSE be readmitted as a party to the basic agreement in 1936; it was the producers who, in effect, imported Browne and Bioff from Chicago, and placed them in charge of the Hollywood locals, and forced 12,000 workers in the industry to join up with the IATSE. On more than one occasion the producers have availed themselves of the services in Hollywood of Browne and Bioff: to force a settlement with the Screen Actors' Guild; to break the strike of the Federation of Motion Picture Crafts in 1937; to raid the Studio Utility Employees in the same year; to threaten the employees during the recent strike at Walt Disney's Studio. This genuinely shocking situation, of trade-union officials being paid off by employers, is now being presented as though the employers were being "blackmailed" by Browne and Bioff. There may have been an element of extortion in the plot by which these two men received $500,000 from the producers, but actually it was 12,000 workers in Hollywood, and not the producers, who were the victims. The producers knew who Bioff and Browne were in 1936; they dealt with them fully cognizant of their records in Chicago; they had not the slightest scruple in signing a closed-shop agreement with these two men in 1936 when the IATSE did not have in excess of thirty-five members in Hollywood. That such tough traders as Nicholas and Joseph Schenck, Louis B. Mayer and Jack Warner could actually be "imposed upon" by Willie and George, had they not had their own axe to grind, may sound plausible in New York and Washington, but not in Hollywood.

If the studio workers in Hollywood are ever going to be able to throw off the shackles of Bioff and Browne, now is the time. The Grand Jury in New York is already investigating the circumstances surrounding the two-percent assessment, and Bioff must stand trial soon, in Los Angeles, for income-tax evasion. In these circumstances it would be unfortunate if the favorable publicity acquired by the producers in Washington, during the so-called "monopoly-propaganda" investigation, should cause indifference to their long and devious record of dealing with racketeering trade unionists.

Los Angeles CAREY MCWILLIAMS

Two Poems

Oil Field

The derricks cleave the clean arc of the wind
Like teeth, shredding the pure curve of the air;
Ore, thrust up from earth and far from here,
Is solid in sky, wrecks wind, masters this land.

Here some emotion, urge for intimate meeting,
Moves shafts to thrust root deep in the shale;
In under-landscape, lust of metal and oil
Stretch to each other and consummate a mating.

Then the great spurt of life, but not for us.
The engine moves, the driving rods are quickened,
But life is not to us; the ground is blackened,
The houses bleak, no beauty where beauty was.

Fathered forth, made vital, shapes of steel
Push down the red-brown hills, pull down the sky
On us, whose final strength and mastery
Was lost through some bewildering betrayal.

JOHN DILLON

Night Driving

How swift, in the white of night, the shadows go—
No wind could toss them so
But something other than the wind has done—
And did you notice as we came along
How the road looked pale, straight-stretching as a bone,
And how, when we stop, the shadows close and throng?

Night is the time to drive! The home roads take
Strange airs of threat, and make
All that we do seem dangerous and alive.
Sometimes I've wondered what we have to give
That shadows want—watching them as they strive
Mothily to the lights for the brief time they live.

VALENTINE ACKLAND

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Washington Notes

Farm Prices v. Wage Fixing

THE FARM LOBBY and its representatives in Congress plow a straight furrow. They know precisely what they want and they gather no wild flowers on their way to get it. Even if they know that the prices of what they must buy in the city will go up as much as or even more than farm prices, they still want more dollars for their pigs, their grain and their truck. They need no economist to tell them that it will be easier to pay off the mortgage on the south sixty if dollars come easy. The West and South are still debtors to the East, and all debtors like a touch of inflation.

So it is only natural that the farm bloc—the largest and most cohesive in Congress—should be standing in the way of price-control legislation. Administration spokesmen knew they would have the farmers to fight when they set out to prevent a price runaway of the kind that started in the First World War, continued through the twenties and finally upset the apple cart in 1929. But they thought perhaps they could overcome the self-interest of the farmer this time by appealing for preservation of the national economy.

It was unfortunate that this appeal had to be put to the test first in the House Banking and Currency Committee. This committee, it so happens, is top-heavy with farm representatives. Some of them, like Chairman Henry B. Steagall of Alabama and Wright Patman of Texas, have been in the forefront of the inflationary movement for years. They are sophisticated, even cynical veterans of the fight for higher farm prices, whether these prices be called parity or something else. Most members of the committee, however, are rookies whose knowledge of banking and currency is, to put it as mildly as possible, limited.

The committee started hearings on the administration's price-control bill on August 5, and the end is not yet in sight. Indeed, there has been no attempt so far to formulate a calendar of witnesses. The old-timers seem to be conducting a filibuster and the newcomers are acting like freshmen who have suddenly and unexpectedly become interested in the course. It has been, in fact, an excellent course in elementary and advanced economics. First, Leon Henderson, the government price-controller, delivered a long series of lectures. Committee members made it plain when he started that they considered him a charlatan. They accused him of trying to sell them planned-economy snake oil. But before he finished, Henderson had won the ear and the respect of the committee. He was followed by Bernard M. Baruch, who assured the congressmen that they at last had Henderson right, and who made, obviously, a deep impression on the class. Currently Isador Lubin, commissioner of Labor Statistics, is the exchange professor and he, too, is beating down the objections to price control in impressive fashion.

But meanwhile prices are moving up alarmingly. Lubin has introduced charts showing that the wholesale prices of twenty-eight basic commodities have moved up past 150 on an index using the August, 1939, average as 100. A similar chart shows that the wholesale prices of basic foodstuffs have passed 160. Retail prices are still down around 110, but they will soon be catching up with wholesale quotations. The advance would have been faster than it has been but for the work of Henderson, who has accomplished much by wheedling and table-thumping but whose authority is no broader than his considerable capacity for bluff and bluster.

A majority of the committee now seems convinced that some kind of price-fixing legislation is indicated. The administration bill would give Henderson or another price-fixer authority to clamp ceilings on the prices of individual manufactures and farm commodities are circumstances warranted. Prices that behaved well voluntarily would not be coerced. There would be some latitude for fluctuation below the ceilings even in the fields affected by regulation. This bill now has a rival in one sponsored by Representative Albert Gore of Tennessee. This measure would require the price administrator to freeze everything as of a given day and permit no fluctuation. It would cover wages as well as commodities and manufactures. Nothing would be left unregulated except profits.

The Gore bill is represented—and sometimes misrepresented—as the embodiment of Baruch's advice. It is true that Baruch wants to freeze all prices at a given level. In this, he does not wholly agree with Henderson, who is opposed to such a rigid formula. As to wages, however, Baruch has never quite made himself clear. He said in his testimony before the House committee that wages would have to be fixed along with everything else, but added that labor should not be deprived of the right to bargain collectively or to strike. Henderson and Lubin both advanced strong arguments against wage-fixing. They pointed out, first of all, that it would probably be unconstitutional, since labor is not a commodity and there can be no such thing as forced labor under a government that guarantees liberty for the individual. They discussed the difficulties of administering a wage-control law. Lubin introduced a mound of evidence showing that there is no fixed relationship between wages and prices—that wages have lagged far behind prices, accounting for only about 7 percent of a 20-percent increase in the all-commodity index.

The farm-dominated committee still refuses to see it that way though. If farmers are to be denied the benefits of a war inflation—and some of the farm members now agree that they should be for the general good—then labor must have its tail cut off too, the Constitution and the distinction between commodities and labor notwithstanding. This attitude, which will make itself felt in the House, spells trouble for labor when the price-control issue finally emerges, as it probably will eventually, from committee. And labor is unprepared for this kind of trouble.

Representative Sam Hobbs of Alabama has been conferring with some second-string labor leaders in an effort to get labor support for his concentration-camp bill. He has told them that his measure, authorizing confinement of aliens pending deportation, is intended merely to provide for the aliens' "supervision." He uses the word in much the same way that the Nazis use the term "protective custody." However they say it, it still means jail. The Hobbs bill is due for consideration by the House soon.

Washington T. R. B.

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Two for the Show

EVERY TIME that you think the Disney studio can't do any more because they have done everything, they turn around and do it again, the new and never dreamed of, the thing lovely and touching and gay. "Dumbo" is the new feature-length film and I believe you could see it four times anyway, for there is much in it of frank and open laughter, there is much in it so high of fancy that you will not assimilate everything the first two times—and like everything done by the people of that organization, quick as their sympathy and understanding for the animals of their eternal fables have to be, there is something of sweetness and quick feeling that is often close to tears.

The idea was a natural, taken from a book: a baby elephant in a circus who is always in trouble and has ears so big he is considered a freak. His mother elephant is called mad and put in irons because she tears the place up a little in his defense, and so he is practically an orphan and, much worse, made a clown in the show. It is as simple as that, and unless such simplicities put a match to the imagination, as they invariably seem to do to the Disney staff, you had better leave the story as it would come out on paper alone. The thing is done with expressions, with incidents arising from character and the general nature of things, and with a constant improvisation that is not only an endless wonder but the first, perhaps the only, machinery for true fable of our time.

More than ever in this picture, Disney is bringing in the distinctive human element, while still remaining in the background of the cartoon. The voices are those not of specialized sound men but of character actors; the facial cast of an elephant here, a tiger there, is closer to someone known; the comment on human affairs is very busy and sharp. Those boys are always moving forward in experiment: there is a difference here, and more edge. (Strangely enough, they have taken cognizance of the terrors of "Snow White," and those who make it their business to see that children eat their cereal and don't have too good a time pronounce this one free of any evil, while admitting its excitement.) The one other noticeable advance in cartoon technique is a bold stepping out in the field of deliberate fantasy, as tied into the story by dream, by the imagined image, by a hangover even. Whatever you wish to call it, I say that nothing, not even "Alice in Wonderland," has turned nonsense into such strictly sensible beauty as the sequence of the pink-elephant dance; I have never seen anything to approach it and neither have you, because there hasn't been anything. And the children will like it as they like "The Jungle Books"—it is made for them as well as for us; and they will like it and go through the skies with it as they never could with the legend of Pegasus, taught in school. The highest and most rare of experimentation has been brought by the iron rule of movies-to-please-the-public to the lowest common denominator, has been tried and justified, and is still so far out ahead of any crackpot artist who thought of wiring geranium pots onto the second-floor windows of the Museum of Modern Art, for the music of rhythm and the astounding creations of the human mind, that you feel what a child must feel before any crackpot artist. All I can say is that there were between twelve and twenty of us looking at another Disney, and that we had all of us been looking at pictures in a way of amateur professionalism for years, and we were none of us, for once, either very vocal or very coherent. It is one of the lovely things, a proof of pictures.

There is one more thing to notice and that is the harmless nature of the fun, the comedy without malice. The black-crow chorus, for example, might seem to be straight out of Octavus Roy Cohen, but that is only seeming and the truth of it is finally that the thing is done with such affection that even its close and clever take-off leaves you with the appreciation of something done for the love of it only. I have done a little hollering on the score of the Disney sound effects and music being the best that have been put to the use of pictures, and I see no reason to discontinue. "Dumbo" ends in almost a blaze of music and the chances are you will come away from it singing with the crow choir: "I done been seen 'bout most everything." And that sums it up: you have done been—until next time.

The story of "The Remarkable Mr. Kipps" is one of those satires involving a good man being made a fool of which are insistent enough to be painful, and which now seem dated more in the manner of treatment than in subject matter. And Carol Reed's movie from the old Wells novel (made in England for Twentieth Century-Fox release here) fails to be thoroughly enjoyable through just such considerations. It was made to follow the original idea carefully and too carefully. When the young draper's clerk suddenly inherits an estate, there follows an unremitting series of incidents in which he is played for the most painful kind of chump by a set of the most flagrant kind of snobs. You are not given any relief, or any sense of conflict either, and condescension and conniving are laid on so thick by the various actors selected to represent types that you fall from hoping he will slap *somebody's* face to the resigned belief that he has not actually the native good sense and dignity to take him out of the idiot class into anything worth all this fictional fuss and labor.

If the characters to be exposed had been held to the subtlety of understatement, some of the curse might have been removed. And the ending of the picture on the other hand is such an understatement of any point made as to be simply inconclusive. Otherwise, it is a well made yarn, shrewd in little things, blessed in its profusion of such odds and ends as details from life, from character, from customs and period. The good English directors, the conscientious and humane people, have fine things to give us in the way of solid natural backgrounds and character parts. The actors, of course, fortuitously escape the worn familiarity of our Hollywood types, bobbing up picture after picture —they only correspond to our Walter Brennans and Slim Summervilles and Warren Hymers and Gene Lockharts.

In any event, it is the people and the way they are built solidly into their world that matter here. Michael Redgrave throws away all chances to be dashing in recreating the chump; Arthur Roscoe has a perfectly gorgeous time as the unreliable cockney theatre buff; Diana Wynyard is the girl of the story. It is one of those things that clicks into its place without trying to go above it, and it seems a pity to waste such work in production on material, whether or not it is supposed by the foolish to be classic, on stuff so poor.

OTIS FERGUSON

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A Communication

The Surrealists—Isolationists of Art

SIR: Stark Young suggests in a recent article [The New Republic, September 15] that the Modern Museum's heart belongs to Dada. It would be more appropriate for the Modern Museum to go on record as opposing a movement so lacking in bowels. Art is receiving more publicity and popular interest than ever before in our history, yet our public has almost stopped buying paintings and sculpture. That is the crisis.

At this particular moment, critical indeed to American art, a fresh impetus has been given to the always decadent and recently dying movement of Surrealism and the more ingrown of the French Abstractionists. This impetus has been partly weighted by the influx of the lesser giants from the *école de Paris*, by now worn somewhat threadbare. It has been thrown into high relief by the publicity methods of certain New York dealers and the vociferous antics of their little mountebank showmen; and also by the official stamp of the Museum of Modern Art, which has given fine cultural exhibitions in many fields, but in the domain of painting has a reputation for reëditing in de-luxe editions what was *le dernier mot* in Paris twenty years ago.

This little and quite unimportant Paris group—the isolationists of contemporary art—will have no permanent niche in the history of painting; but backed by the kudos of snobbery, the weight of money and the promotional methods of Fifth Avenue and the Rue de la Boétie, they can have an unwholesome, if not pernicious, influence on the present healthy trend of American art.

Every significant artist alive today has to a greater or less degree been influenced by the school of French Modernism, which, as a movement essentially dynamic and genial, had a double challenge. First, it led a vigorous and successful attack on the debased neo-renaissance and neo-baroque schools, which had dominated Europe since the sixteenth century. Second, through an analysis of esthetics and a revaluation of the meaning and purpose of art and the relation of content to significant form, the Paris movement challenged the pictorial element in art, and gave birth to the various schools of abstraction: Cubism, Futurism, Vorticism, Dadaism, etc.

These two phases of Modernism, though distinct in origin and purpose, are often found together in the same artist or in the same work of art. Witness the paintings of Picasso, Braque, Juan Gris, Léger, etc. But whereas modern design is essentially robust, the emphasis on abstraction—or more properly the negation of content in painting—had in it the elements of decay. These painters, whose palette was as fresh as their esthetic philosophy was muddy, failed to distinguish the difference in intent between formal and pictorial art. The purpose of the one is to enhance the shape, or form, of a useful material object; that of the other is to tell a story in pictorial symbols. As French Modernism ran its course, its painters grew further from their contact with life, until finally their preoccupation was not life at all but solely art—for art's sake. Today these artists find themselves impotent and inarticulate in confronting the world we live in. Art lives on life and must integrate itself in our national life as a social necessity or it will nose-dive.

There is no immediate danger to the Republic from this band of weazened, sapless and occasionally loud-mouthed *homunculi*. Let them play with their melting watch-chains, their rubber snakes and other childish contraptions without much threat of hidden bomb. But let us not take them too seriously either. The only danger is to our common sense, indeed to our sense of humor. Surrealism is the art of escape and it will leave no footprint on the sands of time, but its unwarranted promotion can momentarily hold back the flow of deeper tides.

Pacific Palisades, Calif. GEORGE BIDDLE

The Bandwagon

The Nazi military command in Norway has announced that suicide by German soldiers will be regarded as an attempt to escape, making relatives punishable under a new death decree, it was reported today. – *Dispatch from Stockholm, printed in The New York Post.*

Not all the by-products of the maneuvers [in Louisiana] have been salutary, the report continued, citing cases of girls who reported they had married soldiers who were unable to produce marriage certificates. – *AP dispatch printed in The New York World-Telegram.*

"The law requires that no person may teach a subject in the schools of the City of New York unless he has been licensed to do so," Mandel and Mandel claim. "All public officials should be humane, provided they can do so without violating the law or being humane for one at the expense of another." – *From The New York Times.*

Not Tattle-Tale Gray?

Mr. and Mrs. Kingdon Gould and their daughter, Edith, were Jimmie O'Gorman's luncheon guests. Hatless, Edith sported a beautiful corsage of orchids on the shoulder of her almost white suit. – *From The New York Daily News.*

Win or Else, Eh?

West Virginia University, snapping back from its Navy debacle of a week ago with the brilliant assistance of 156-pound Bill Bell, substitute back, rang up a 20 to 0 decision over West Virginia Wesleyan today.

The Mountaineers went out to battle on the heels of a declaration by Governor Matthew Neely that he was tired of having the state "disgraced" every year by the poor showing of the team. – *AP dispatch from Morgantown, W. Va., in The New York Herald Tribune.*

Truth-at-Any-Price Department

We admit the real McCoy is tempting. We only wish this bride on a budget had known about our McCoy juniors on the third floor. There, the same authentic design and good taste that we lavish on our more expensive pieces . . . at prices that don't mortgage your future. Incidentally, you haven't forgotten, too . . . that SLOANE DOES BOTH? – *From a W. and J. Sloane advertisement in The New Yorker Magazine.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

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Correspondence

Eastern Front

SIR: You believe that we should declare a war against the Axis. So do I. Better late than never. But really, do you believe we can win this war, aside from oppressively outstaying it beyond your lifetime and mine, by throwing into it anything less than our best? And all of that?

Your Max Werner has discovered an Eastern front, and you believe that it is a European front. Actually, the line is even now being drawn through the borders of Asia, south from the White Sea to the Black, from the Arctic Circle to the Caucasian Barrier—and now the British, seeking to keep one clear channel, for lack of which they lost the Russians as allies before, have encouraged the Soviets to strike down part way through Iran. This hostile country will furnish, you believe, a Soviet Burma Road. But perhaps the British do not believe Russia has suddenly acquired any of the offensive power so conspicuously lacking in the Finnish war? Perhaps they merely calculate that Soviet resistance can be kept alive by permitting a trickle of encouragement to flow upward via the Trans-Caspian—a modest expedient which avoids the Black Sea area entirely and adds, at the same time, half a thousand miles of one-track rail?

You see an opportunity for the democracies in this. I do not, nor do I believe does anyone who has honestly considered the nature of Nazi war. I see necessity, and confusion, and loss. We are watching Hitler hammer up the bulletproof backdrop against which he will put on the most convincing play for his peace any of us have yet seen. Let us be honest for once: this is neither an opportunity, nor a victory. It is, if we act clear-headedly now, the penultimate defeat that has preceded victory in many wars of the past.

I would like to question, and in the most serious way, Mr. Werner's statements: (1) That an American declaration will enable the democracies to arrange a genuine "war of coalition" on all fronts, with special emphasis on the Russian front, and (2) that this "war of coalition" will liberate Soviet offensive power—the only power that can conclusively win the war.

Mr. Werner promises us a "strategy and tactics" for winning the war. Now "strategy" is a very vague word; any war talk, not excluding the daily discussions that appear in newspaper editorials, can be called strategic comment. But where are Mr. Werner's "tactics"? This is a definite term in military usage, an engineering concept: the effect of weapons and men in combination. Mr. Werner shows no signs of knowing what he means or of what he seeks to imply, in his key-phrase, "war of coalition."

Second, he is heavily concerned to prove that the Soviets have "offensive power" and he builds up his case on certain airplane-production statistics. "Soviet warplane production had reached at least 8,000 units a year even by 1935-36 . . . since that time the increase in Soviet plane production has averaged between 30 and 40 percent a year." Have you a bit of pencil? Begin with 8,000 in 1935, and increase by 35 percent annually, including 1941. The result will be, in round numbers, an estimated production of 4,000 Soviet warplanes per month at the present time. This just about equals the warplane production of Germany, England and the United States together. The Soviet Union may be a big country, but obviously it's not big like that.

If Mr. Werner really means what he writes, I accuse him of fraud. These articles upon which you build your declaration of policy contain the most consistently muddled hash of assumption and gassed-up guesswork that has ever been seen on rough paper or slick. And what shall we say of The New Republic in particular? That it is careless? That war experts are kittle cattle and hard to pick anyway? That your hearts are in the right place, no matter where the feet go, even unto the pit?

Hightstown, N. J. OSCAR BRYNES

SIR: I did not discover the eastern front. It exists. According to figures given by Churchill, the Wehrmacht has suffered losses on this front at a rate ten times as high as that of its losses on all other fronts in two years of war. Mr. Brynes wants me to tell him what a "war of coalition" is. This is my answer: Strategic planning and a maximum of mutually coördinated effort. I insist that the Russian front affords the Anglo-Saxon powers the greatest chance they could possibly have for victory in a war of coalition. Mr. Brynes doubts that the Red Army has any offensive potential. Yet without strong supplies of offensive arms—tanks, planes, artillery—the Red Army would have long ago been beaten, as the French army was beaten. Why has the Red Army's offensive potential not come into play so far? Lord Beaverbrook gave the answer in his speech of October 12: "The Russians bear at present the full brunt, the entire burden of the enemy's attack."

Mr. Brynes is of the opinion that a Soviet plane production of 4,000 units a month would equal the combined production of Britain, the United States and Germany. Actually it would be only half as great.

As for the rest of Mr. Brynes's letter, I regret that I cannot bring myself to emulate his polemic methods.

New York City MAX WERNER

Our Error

SIR: In the interest of historical accuracy the phrase, "Don't cheer boys—those poor devils are dying," attributed by Jesse Rainsford Sprague to Winfield Scott Schley at Santiago, was spoken by Captain John W. Philip of the Texas right after the Spaniards surrendered.

Scarsdale, N. Y. J. J. FRANK

[Mr. Frank and Mr. H. A. Whipple, who also wrote in, are correct. Mr. Sprague's mistake is one that is frequently made, but it was Captain John W. Philip who spoke the words mistakenly attributed to Admiral Schley. — THE EDITORS]

"Old Unhappy, Far-Off Things"

SIR: I have been publishing books for too many years ever to dispute the *opinions* of a reviewer, such as those so boldly but possibly unwisely put into print by Mr. Cowley (The New Republic, September 22). Yet it is interesting to find a critic willing to assert that Stephen Foster is poetry; why not Thomas Nelson Page and Albert Chevalier? What could be brisker, more close to the great heart of the people than:

Larst night dahn an elly kime a torf,
Nahce ole geeser wiv a narsty korf,
Sees moy missus, tikes 'is topper orf,
Wiv a very gen'lemanly air-er?

There are such things as facts, which reviewers (even) should face. Mr. Cowley says my anthology is "less complete" than

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"The Oxford Book" "in its treatment of the major figures." Every major figure in English and American poetry from Chaucer to Hardy is more fully represented in my anthology. Just compare, as instances, Marlowe and Donne, Herman Melville and Emily Dickinson.

Mr. Cowley says: "He includes hardly any poems of childhood, these being 'sentimental.' " Indeed! If you will grant me space I will list the poems of and about childhood in "The Viking Book of Poetry":

"I Sing of a Maiden"; "Can I Not Sing"; "Joseph Was an Old Man"; "As Joseph Was a-Walking"; "As I Sat Under a Sycamore Tree"; "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen"; "The First Nowell"; Nicholas Breton's "A Sweet Lullaby"; Robert Greene's "Weep Not, My Wanton"; Robert Southwell's "The Burning Babe"; Richard Rowlands' "Upon My Lap My Sovereign Sits"; Dekker's "Golden Slumbers Kiss Your Eyes"; Ben Jonson's "Epitaph on Salathiel Pavey"; Phineas Fletcher's "Elisa"; Sir John Beaumont's "Of My Dear Son"; Herrick's "Grace for a Child"; Waller's "To a Very Young Lady"; Crashaw's "Hymn of the Nativity"; Vaughan's "The Retreat"; Gray's "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College"; William Blake's "Piping Down the Valleys Wild"; "A Cradle Song"; "Infant Joy"; "A Little Boy Lost"; Robert Burns's "Welcome to His Love-Begotten Daughter"; Wordsworth's "Surprised by Joy—Impatient as the Wind" and "Ode, Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood"; Coleridge's "A Little Child, a Limber Elf"; Moore's "Child's Song"; Shelley's "To the Lord Chancellor"; Elizabeth Browning's "The Cry of the Children"; Longfellow's "My Lost Youth"; Emily Brontë's "Tell Me, Tell Me, Smiling Child"; Arnold's "The Forsaken Merman"; Coventry Patmore's "The Toys"; Hardy's "To an Unborn Pauper Child"; Robert Bridges' "Pater Filio" and "On a Dead Child"; Henley's "Epilogue to Rhymes and Rhythms."

That refutes one of Mr. Cowley's falsehoods. The others I must leave, since I cannot ask for columns of your space to put down the facts. I merely suggest to you that for reviewing a book of the scope and depth of "The Viking Book" something more is needed than a casual turning over the pages and a rehash of Cambridge-Bloomsbury fads which were obsolete in London ten years ago.

Nokomis, Fla. RICHARD ALDINGTON

[Mr. Aldington's letter makes four points. Let me answer them *seriatim*.

First point. To quote a bright Cockney song doesn't prove that Stephen Foster's best lyrics aren't poetry; it has nothing to do with the question one way or another. What Mr. Aldington is really saying, here and elsewhere, is that he doesn't like ballads or folksongs.

Second point. There are two Oxford anthologies that try to cover the whole of English verse. I said that Mr. Aldington's collection was "more comprehensive and more in the taste of our time than 'The Oxford Book of English Verse' "—that is, the famous volume edited by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Mr. Aldington agrees, hotly and at length. But I also said—and I had good reason for saying—that his book "is less complete and judicious in its treatment of the major figures" than "The Oxford Anthology of English Poetry"—that is, the less famous but no less valuable collection edited by Howard Foster Lowry and Willard Thorp. Mr. Aldington applies this statement to the wrong book.

Third point. It seems that he has gone through his own collection and listed all the poems that contain even a passing reference to children. I am sorry for having put him to all this trouble. Very few of the poems he mentions are "of childhood" in the sense that children like to hear them, or share the emotions they express, or even know what they mean. Some of them are philosophical laments for lost youth, and would properly be classified as poems of old age.

Fourth point. Many authors, on being reviewed with anything less than holy reverence, like to comfort themselves by saying that the reviewers haven't read their books, or are telling deliberate falsehoods about them. Sometimes, of course, they are right—but not often, and not Mr. Aldington.—M. C.]

A Conference on Democracy

SIR: A conference of the International Labor Organization is to meet at Columbia University from October 27 to November 5.

Official delegates are expected from approximately thirty member nations, including the United States. In most cases they will include representataives of employers and workers as well as of governments. Among the delegates will be Major Clement Attlee, member of the British War Cabinet and leader of the Labor Party; the foreign ministers of Belgium and Czecho-Slovakia; a member of the New Zealand Cabinet; and the secretaries of labor of Mexico, Chile, Cuba, Bolivia and several other countries.

Items before the conference will include the resignation report of the former director, Mr. John G. Winant, a report by the acting director, Mr. E. J. Phelan, on "The ILO and Reconstruction," and a report prepared at the ILO's working center in Montreal on "Wartime Developments in Government-Employer-Worker Collaboration."

As chairman of the Columbia University Committee on Arrangements, I am writing to suggest that many of your readers may be interested in the conference. This gathering of workers, employers and government representatives constitutes the first general international meeting since the fall of France. It should therefore provide a significant opportunity for the clarification of the social objectives of the democratic peoples.

New York City LINDSAY ROGERS

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Letters continue to pour in about Jesse Rainsford Sprague's article "Slaughter, Sponsored by—" (The New Republic, October 6). J. A. Simington of Pasadena, California, suggests two possible remedies for the nuisance. The Federal Communications Commission could rule that advertising announcements be confined to the beginning and end of a fifteen-minute program. Or the present corporation-tax law which fixes no limit to the amount which can be spent and deducted as advertising expense, could be amended to limit deductions to two percent of sales. "Under the present law," says Mr. Simington, "the government is actually furnishing most of the money and injuring the people by doing so." The following people have also written in to say they stand 100 percent with Mr. Sprague: Ann White Blumenthal, New York City; Mrs. Walter S. Baer, Chicago; Isa L. Partch, Birmingham, Michigan; and William Frazier, Lombard, Illinois.

A. Ballard Walton, Lakewood, Ohio, submits two questions, which, he feels, should be answered if certain world problems are to be solved: (1) Harriman to Stalin: "Your Constitution calls for religious freedom. Why haven't you got it? (2) Stalin to Harriman: Your Constitution calls for the public control of money. Why haven't you got it?"

Under his own heading of "Christian Viewpoint," John Kerry of Montreal, Canada, sends us an excerpt from a speech by Jesuit Father W. X. Bryan of Loyola College, as quoted in The Montreal Gazette of October 9: "Personally I would be perfectly satisfied if the Nazis and Russians went to it like a couple of Kilkenny cats, fighting so hard that nothing was left in the end but their tails."

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Pegasus Hits the Street

The more he did such things as mortal horses are accustomed to do, the less earthly and the more wonderful he seemed.—Hawthorne.

ROT—ROT—BAH—I do not write assine [sic] verse," a rejected poet scrawled across the sample copy of a newspaper column of poetry which he had requested from The Providence (R. I.) Sunday Journal. The column, of last May 11, contained a "John Landless" poem by Ivan Goll, and two lyrics, one by Theodore Spencer and the other by Tom Boggs; and it was only the second in what set out to be a weekly feature, "New Verse," that would print and pay for unpublished poetry that the editor thought to be of honorable literary quality. It was designed as a newspaper experiment, run casually in single-column make-up each Sunday in the magazine section, and cheek by jowl with local-color stories, interviews and wire copy.

After twenty weeks or so the column is still continuing, though not entirely without opposition. A long communication from a state group called the "Quinsnicket Writers" declared collectively that "none of us have the required abnormal psychology to understand or to write anything that Mr. Scott would select" and charged the paper with "giving the public a very false idea of what passes for poetry or verse." This was ratified by one of The Journal's own columnists who attacked developments since 1890 in painting, music, architecture and writing, and, with special reference to poetry, found them all "part of the same degenerative disease." There followed a couple of brief boosts; one from a student at Brown University, and the other from the head of the Greek and Latin Classics department there who testified to a mixture of traditional and experimental verse in the column, praised its lack of technical specialization, and called it "the most stimulating selection of new poetry I know." At the one good book shop in Providence, sales of books of poetry have gone up. In the Journal newsroom on dull Sunday evenings the boys now and then turn out a few parodies, not always pure, on that day's "New Verse." Otherwise this latest "lively experiment" goes on with no discernible commotion. Contributions have come from all over the country and from Canada and England; up to two hundred poems a week for a column which can use but three or four each Sunday.

Of course, it is a going concern, first and last, because my employers allowed it to begin and have not caused it to stop. Some cautionary remarks have been offered about "reader interest"—but of course that is one of those questions, like the Holy Ghost. Such a column in fact has to depend entirely on what its editor believes to be good poetry; perhaps, as in "New Verse," poetry of a considerable technical variety, but each poem genuine and interesting in its way; and if this will not guarantee a good column, nevertheless it is the only possible procedure.

There had been some fruitless talk at The Journal three or four years ago about running a column of verse, as a sort of "cultural" thing to do. It would have sought only Rhode Island work, and while a good deal goes on in Providence art circles, the capital and the state are a small kingdom, in which the arts are practised as they usually are in polite society—the same conservative ring around the same petrified rosy. Yet there are a disproportionate number of good writers in the state, quite a lot of experimental painters and even a few experimental composers. A sudden rebellious outburst by some of these in print, on platforms and on gallery walls last spring, set the artier sections of the town buzzing, and a new kind of poetry publication occurred to me as one more pinwheel to set off.

All this I mentioned to my superior. I certainly quoted FPA's remark that there never was a poem too good to appear in newsprint, and I probably observed that nevertheless a look at such verse as did get into American newspapers seemed to prove rather that there never was a poem too bad to appear in newsprint; that, further, on the rare occasions on which one saw a good poem in the newspapers it was reprinted from a magazine; that if newspapers thought good poetry worth reproducing why shouldn't they follow through and literally publish some; that by good poems I meant good poems—the sort that, paid or unpaid, find access to the literary or little magazines but seldom to anywhere else. I asked for an all but deadly minimum of $6 for each Sunday's column. My boss had the grace to be a little startled and a little dubious—perhaps because the only poet he has anything to do with asks for money with annoying frequency.

As it turned out, four (not six) poems are top capacity of the column; so the minimum payment is $1.50 a poem. Payment is proportional. Thus, if two poems fill the column, each poet gets $3; and so on.

My position was that even a dollar was far better than the nothing that most little magazines can offer; and of course I counted principally on getting the work of young poets for whom any "market" is largely a figure of speech. The Journal's position was that perhaps as many people are interested in a column of poetry as are interested in lodge news and what not: meaning, enough. So we went ahead.

Without any conviction as to whether we could attract any decent material at all, I had one special apprehension. It was whether the problem of distribution would upset the whole cart—if, idea or no idea, money or no money, poets would entrust their published work merely to Providence. I seem to have feared unnecessarily. The few "names" the column has had can scarcely be expected to repeat often what was largely a friendly gesture; and though I am grateful, I think the column's principal business is the plentiful good work of the unestablished. Yet even the well known haven't many markets available. Furthermore, the country is full of poets who say "The two they sent back are better than the one they took," and are sometimes right, and "New Verse" may thrive on such residue. Reprinting has carried some of "New Verse" to far greater audiences; it has been done, as one would expect, chiefly from the more traditional poems—a minority in the column itself.

It may be a plain thing to present, yet a list of those who have so far appeared in the column seems to me the simplest way of indicating the kinds of poetry it has published. They are: William Carlos Williams; John Ciardi; John Russell McCarthy; Rainer Maria Rilke (in the first of Herter Norton's translations ever to be used prior to her book publication); Ivan Goll; Theodore Spencer; Tom Boggs; Rolfe Humphries; Ruth Lechlitner; Robert McAlmon; Robert Hillyer; Robert Clairmont; Norman Ros-

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ten; Raymond Souster; Frank Merchant; Daniel Smythe; Eve Merriam; Lincoln Fitzell; C. F. MacIntyre; "W. H. E."; Mary Barnard; Byron A. Vazakas; Josephine Miles; Grant Code; Harvey Breit; John S. Moodey; Jeremy Ingalls; Randall Jarrell; Hyman Swetzoff; Keith Thomas; David Cornel DeJong; Robert Fitzgerald; William Michaux; Ronald Hambleton; Nicholas Moore; Irene Hendry; Harry Roskolenko; Eugene LaVine; Howard Blake; Meyer Liben; Arthur Blair; Lazare Nesin; George Abbe; Marya Zaturenska; Halsey Davis; Eleanor Glenn Wallis; Elizabeth Wood; Phyllis Partridge; J. Mayhall; Richard Price; Phyllis Morden and Richard Eberhart.

Manuscripts, letters, the column itself, other clippings and records are all being piously preserved for eventual repose in the great Harris Collection of American Poetry and Plays at Brown. There may, if the column runs at least two years, be a good anthology in it if a publisher decides that the column has accomplished something.

Whether it will have done so is still a bet. Such a column is not subject to the financial vicissitudes of the little magazines, yet even with the continued coöperation of poets and of Providence Journal authorities it should probably not continue too long. It is bound, rather sooner than later, to exhaust the judgment of its sole editor. At least, as I see it, it can be a part of the current activity in American poetry; a small but strange-and-new part in a newspaper which sells 125,000 copies and which, after all, published some of the early poems and essays of W. B. Yeats, and so has a certain tradition itself worth renewing. And at best, the column might, as I said, turn out to be an example and a beginning.

WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT

Death of the Grandmother

It is almost forgotten . . . the stepping down from swinging light
To the night crossed by the shape of trees; grumble of motion
And the smell of horses, dull penumbras of light and tall blackness.
There is no home in these streets, only recollections of odor, light,
Motion, from days when things broke in the mind to foaming outlines.
Far back in the sleepy brain a faintly known remembering
Swings with the creak of the omnibus and iron shoes on brick pavement.

This is a return through saved memories to the slippered scuffle.
Long since the large grace of the Persian lilac was old with the grapevine
Bending on its trellis. Ponies that once stamped in the barn
Died long ago; ridden no more by girls now lost in taffeta
And emerald-glinting hands, passing the frail cup,
Tipping the brass shine above the spirit lamp.
Go back . . . renew yourself in these colored wells.

Lamps shed paleness spilling on dark cupboards, painted glass doors
Holding all that has gone. The catalpas have dropped green pencils
Now dry-patterned brown on cold lawn. Nothing is left of the peonies
But a round death. As sleep curtains the mind there are bells,
Minor clangings that fall through the catalpa boughs . . .
The whistle at crossing . . . the muffled voice of the shunting . . .
Dreams in this strange yet remembered house circled by bells.

For the young the old die with ease, a ceasing in quiet of one
Who was kind hands. Too early to learn death. The habit
Of funeral strikes queerly . . . a loss not felt but remembered in pictures
Crude with infancy, before that face had changed to the remote glance
From the sheet or the voice was stilled by the death-coming. Pictures that lie
In the remembering mind while the eyes watch an old man lost in deafness
And grief who speaks of a past known only to the blood not the memory.

April, and nothing will hinder the catalpa from urging her rich blossom,
Nor will the blue grape ever cease, and the locust
Over the herringbone drive has an eternity with the house.
Only years will mix shingles and graceful dish, the catalpa and the clap of hooves
And the sad harmony of the bells with this dead who returns diffidently
In dream to a home romantically enlarged by dreaming. . . .
Rooms sheathed in walnut . . . halls singular with shadow . . .

Where the dreamer walks certain of destination, lighting
Her rapid journey with bobbing candle through rooms and stairs
Brought into night-dark being by that light, reflecting now
The panel shine of a closed alcove bed where dreams say
Lie those two so long past dreaming, now sleeping as they rested
In that time behind a closed green-painted door
Where a child might tiptoe not disturbing the fluid slumber of old age.

There lies in the mind as that dream lay in sleep, the jewel of the beginnings,
That which is ancestral, curtained by the catalpa, the high swell of the locust,
And the tune of the circling bells. Rejoice it shall never be lost,
For losing it life would be a faint thing shuddering vainly in the day.

GWENDOLEN HASTE

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Sergeants and Sleepwalkers

As THE GERMAN ARMIES fight their way into Russia on their "crusade" to destroy the sole remaining continental fortress of anti-Nazi culture, it is interesting to look over the literary field they leave behind them in Germany and to guess at the works of contemporary German writers which may find their way into the soldier's knapsack. Certain trends in German war literature have become accentuated in the past year or so, though it is still too early to present a compete outline of recent developments.

The tendency toward an "escape from reality and the present" observed in the works of those writers who, remaining in Nazi Germany and writing under the supervision of the Reichskulturkammer, still try to retain relics of their literary prestige, continues even in the later stages of the war. "Timeless" themes seem to find a large reading public, indicating the continued existence of a large but mute opposition to 100-percent Nazi literature. Among new fictional works with a circulation above 25,000 copies we find one by Hans Fallada, "Kleiner Mann, Grosser Mann—Alles Vertauscht," dealing with the troubles of a little family suddenly lifted by an inheritance out of obscure misery into the shiny hell of millionaire life: a novelette by Gerhart Pohl describing "the adventures of a mad sleepwalker artist"; a work by Ina Seidel, "Unser Freund Peregrinus," classified as a "dream novel"; "Elredefleth," the story of a submerged saga-village in Holstein, by a new literary star, Grete Dölker Rehder; a volume of "fairy pictures and dream figures" by Waldemar Bonses called "Die Goldene Schale"; another volume of stories "half humorous and half mystic" by Josef Winkler called "Die Goldene Kiepe"; and an anthology of verse, "Ein Getreues Herze wissen," which includes not a single poem about the war or contemporary Germany. New verse also has its share of "timeless" subject matter, with a strange emphasis on dreams, sleepwalking and "forgetfulness." Friedrich Griese, known for his peasant novels of *Blut und Boden*, writes verse "about wind and trees and no thought on the troubles of men." Hermann Burte mourns, strangely enough, "about the lost sound, the old one, the genuine one, which vanished in our day's drudgery":

Und ich klage über den verlornen Ton,
Den alten, echten,
Der hingestorben ist in dieser Tage Fron.

Josef Leitgeb goes even farther. In his volume "Läuterungen," we find this confession:

Und unser Wort, so lang gewohnt zu lügen,
Es taugt nicht mehr zum heiligen Gesang

"And our word, so long attuned to lying, is no more fit for holy songs."

On the other hand the output of war songs and stories from the front is continuing on an ever increasing scale, although most of the authors are "new writers" emerging partly from the ranks of the Nazi "company war reporters." Of course the old Nazi hacks are having a good time producing war literature almost on the conveyor belt.

Hanns Johst, president of the Reichskulturkammer, famous for his "When I hear the word culture I release the safety-catch of my Browning," has published a big volume of "War Songs from Poland." Together with Magnus Wehner and Richard Hohlbaum, he has edited a book, "German Poets on the Battlefields of Poland," under the motto: "What the soldier conquered, what the State now holds, must be melted into the Reich by the poet." Stories of Polish atrocities and of glamorous "Nazi heroism" in bad prose and still worse doggerel fill this book "recommended for teaching purposes" by the Nazi Party. Heinrich Zerkaulen, Franz Höller, Hjalmar Kutzleb, Götz Ruhmann and other celebrities of "Adolf Hitler's spiritual stormtroops"—to quote Hanns Johst—have published volumes of poetry about the war in Norway, in France, in the skies over England. It is old stuff of the same kind the war poets produced twenty-five years ago under the Kaiser and which the official Nazi Party bards concocted in the years of Hitler's ascent to power.

But from time to time a new sound creeps into that poetry of "flying flags." This new sound grows louder proportionately as the war lasts longer than the German people were told it would. It is a mystical and tragic sound: the glorification of death and sometimes the cultivation of "love for death." It is not by chance that the "Songbook for Our Field Soldiers" opens up with the verse:

Auf der Trommel liegt mein Herz
Tambour, schlage drein,
Morgen geht es todeswärts. . . .

"My heart lies upon the drum, drummer beat, tomorrow we're marching toward death. . . ." And even such a renowned "master of Nazi humor" as Willibald Klähn writes about "death—the soldier's bride of tomorrow." Still another anthology of war songs, "Poems in Steelhelmet," has the motto (paraphrased presumably from Leonardo da Vinci), "We Germans sometimes do not understand how to live, but we always understand admirably how to die."

An innovation of the Nazi High Command in the field of literature is the creation of a new category of "morale officer": the *Bibliotheks-Feldwebel*, or sergeant-major librarian. It is the duty of this sergeant-major not only to take care of the company library but also to report on the soldiers' reading, to advise them on what to read and to help those in charge of the army libraries to "complete book stocks in a certain way, to control the reading predilections and to educate by reading." As a result of the reports of these sergeant-major librarians, the educational department of the Brown House assigned a large amount of money for the purchase of "literature bolstering the national socialist conscience" of the soldiers. This amount was called the *Rosenbergspende*. The publishing house of the Nazi Party, Franz Eher Verlag, issues a series of "field mail editions," paper-bound books up to 100 pages at a price of 1.20 marks, ready for mailing to the soldiers in the field armies. The series opened with a condensed edition of "Mein Kampf"; a complete edition of "Mein Kampf" was brought out in a double number. The subsequent twenty numbers were war stories and humorous stuff in a proportion of two to one. Authors of these *Feldpostausgaben* are mostly young Nazi writers, with a sprinkling of literati of pre-Hitler literary standing. Here are some of the authors and their works: Hermann Gerstener's

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"The Gray Coat"; Heinz Grünwald's "Sacrifice to Honor"; Friedrich Klähn's "Sergeant Weber" and "Timm the Clodhopper"; Otto Paust's "Eight Brass Buttons"; Gustav Christian Rassy's "Parish Schoolmaster and King"; Uf Uweson's "We Fought in Flanders"; Franz Höller's "Flags and Drums"; Willi Pleyer's "Blood of Sudetenland"; Gustav Frenssen's "Right or Wrong—My Country"; Hans Bethge's "The King—Anecdotes of Frederick the Great"; Hans Zöberlein's "The Shrapnel Tree."

The "social note" and the "revolutionary theme" fostered in the early stages of the war by the official Nazi literary critics and publishing organizations have been abandoned. But there are a great many short stories, novelettes and sketches dealing with the "ethical and human side" of the German soldier, with his love for peaceful work being thwarted by the war lust of the enemy. This literary trend doubtless indicates the growing presence of popular fears about a war which promised to be short but is driving forward toward unknown regions in space and time and toward an end veiled in darkness.

F. C. WEISKOPF

Fall Books in Review

The People's Choice

Out of the People, by J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper and Brothers. 160 pages. $1.50.

IT IS EASY to make sounds about democracy. It is not easy to make sense about democracy. Mr. Priestley makes sense—and a great deal of it.

He makes sense, first of all, about the issue of this war. The division, says Mr. Priestley, is not between any of the usual pairs of verbal opposites: the ideological humpty-dumpties. It is not a division between the capitalists and the communists or the communists and the fascists or the fascists and the capitalists. It is a division between those who trust the people and those who do not trust the people: between those to whom the people are the people in need of nothing but themselves, and those to whom the people are the masses with the masses' need of masters. It is a division, that is to say, between those who believe that the people can make a better world for themselves than any party or elite or dictator can make for them, and those who believe that the dream of the people is over and that only the bright boys of the party or the strong boys of the shirts can save the world.

This is a sensible way to put the business for two reasons: first, it is true; second, it corresponds to actual things. It draws a line where the line is, not where the collective nouns would put it. Hitler has made stranger bedfellows than politics ever did and the blanket labels merely bundle them in. Mr. Priestley's simple definition has the opposite effect: it sorts them out. It indicates which of our colleagues are our friends. If there are certain of our ostensible colleagues who share Mr. Hitler's theory of masters and masses (and there are, and Mr. Priestley names some of them), then we may be quite certain that they are our colleagues only so long as they are compelled to be our colleagues. After which they will be their own colleagues.

This is useful information to have. The common fronts forged by common fear or common danger are apt to be larger than the common fronts forged by common belief or common hope, but they have this fatal weakness—that they can only resist, and that once their resistance is accomplished they disintegrate. Those of us who are determined not only that this war shall be won but that the peace shall be won also will do well to bind ourselves together, not with a common fear of Hitler, but with a common determination that the thing Hitler is attempting to destroy—the free life of free men—shall triumph not only over fascism but over all those, living and dead, who oppose it.

Mr. Priestley's book is, in its essence, a declaration that the wartime unity of Britain is precisely such a unity. British unity, in other words, is not the kind of *ad-hoc* unity dictated by the war, the purely negative unity, which certain of our more timid publicists would like to see concocted in America. It is unity *for*, not unity *against*. And the thing it is for is the most deeply affirmative, the most profoundly positive, of all the causes of mankind—the cause which has supplied from the beginning of our experience upon this continent the dynamic of American life—the cause Thomas Jefferson put into words when he said: "The earth belongs always to the living generation. They may manage it then and what proceeds from it as they please during their usufruct. They are masters too of their own persons, and consequently may govern them as they please."

If Mr. Priestley is an accurate reporter, and he is generally conceded to be something more than that, then this account presents matter of the first importance to all of us in this country who are concerned with the immediate future. For what it means is this: that the mobilization of a democratic people to resist fascism need not necessarily involve, as some have tried to tell us that it must, the surrender of democracy, but may have precisely the opposite effect—has indeed had precisely the opposite effect in the one democratic country which has actually made the attempt. "For nearly twenty years," says Mr. Priestley, "we have been told . . . by our political theorists, that the term democracy has ceased to mean anything and that it was time we stopped using it. But now it seems to me that it is one of the very few political terms that *do* mean anything. You can see a future for it."

It was rarely enough in the world before the war that responsible people, to say nothing of responsible writers, used words like these. That they can be used today by a responsible writer facing the actualities that Englishmen face would be almost unbelievable—if everything in the record of wartime England did not give them a convincing credit. For what has happened in England is quite obviously that the people of England have awakened not only to their (and our) danger but to their lives and to their possibilities. . . . "And this coming to life of the people means de-

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mocracy. It is what the men who have spoken sincerely of democracy at any time have always had in their minds' eye, this vision of the awakening people. Without the people in this mood there can be no real democracy."

Mr. Priestley's book is not limited to a report of things seen and felt in the England of 1941. It goes on to a lucid and exciting account of the directions in which, as Mr. Priestley sees it, the British awakening, the new British democracy, might move. But exciting as all this is, the principal interest of the book—and it is a very great interest indeed—lies in the well and convincingly reported fact that the people of England are uniting, not merely to resist the fascists, but to counter fascist reaction with the not-yet-achieved, the often deferred, the never defeated Revolution of the People which was the American past—which may, if Mr. Priestley is right, become again the American future.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

Happy Days Are Here Again

Newspaper Days, by H. L. Mencken. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 324 pages. $3.

I DON'T KNOW whether Henry Mencken's reminiscences will be the definitive book on American journalism, though I should think they might be, or whether he will get around to bringing them up through the Smart Set and Mercury years. But they will make the all-around best reading of any book on the trade at large. His second volume, uniform with the first, is called "Newspaper Days" and covers the period 1899-1906, which is to say, from his first application for a newspaper job as a raw kid of eighteen to his early glorification as Sunday editor, city editor (at twenty-three) and finally managing editor (at twenty-five) in the last days as The Baltimore Herald changed to an evening paper and headed toward the boneyard. His rapid advance was the result of many operative factors but mainly of incessant and resourceful industry, twelve to twenty hours a day. Yet he found time on the side for a shocking amount of literary activity, sold short stories all over the place, wrote at least two volumes of poetry, set up a sort of gadget news service, and managed a sound unofficial coverage of beer-swilling contests and firemen's balls. Speaking of the experience of the great Baltimore fire in 1904, he says, "When I came out of it at last I was a settled and indeed almost a middle-aged man, spavined by responsibility and aching in every sinew, but I went into it a boy, and it was the hot gas of youth that kept me going."

There is a power of stuff you cannot learn from books, to be a whole man, and surely the police and city-hall beats in the Baltimore of the 1900's was learning the hard but thorough way. H. L. Mencken went into it, he says, "full of an innocent delight in the world," but if he had any loose baggage of illusions he got quit of it early and painlessly enough so it could not devil him; he "had a grand and gaudy time of it." And he makes just about the best kind of memoirist, neither talking as though he had his dinner clothes on and they were too tight, nor messing the place up with self-analysis, sexual repressions and sighs.

After all this dream-we-lost stuff, all the endless I-saw-pants-fall reverberance, it is pleasant to sit down with a man who grew up while he was growing, whose world was wide but whose knowledge of it was sharp and intimate, who left social apology and uplift and prophecy to others and took in the show, still being part of it. He is not solemn with himself and he isn't with anything else. Possibly his brisk and offhand way with the various currents of life in America will annoy many who talk more and actually know less about them; and certainly he is the first to tell you he has no more social responsibility than a cat. But he is a damn good reporter and he knows where the side door is on anything from fancy houses to a Republican convention; moreover, he knows, appreciates and does proud the profession he has spent most of his life in and is now talking about, from the hand-set whiskey of the Baltimore printers to the stereotype, the city room, the front office, the legal department. No reporter, or artist, or press foreman, or hot professor, or minister of the faith, no flack or floozie or tub-thumper could put anything over on him from the age of twenty-three, and that is saying quite a lot when you look around the field. What mistakes he has made or seems to have made are usually the result of (1) his firm and often justified conviction that the world is still the Baltimore city hall, (2) his not having heard somebody else through the bull-moose racket he keeps up himself.

He will seem to have been lucky, he will seem to have missed many of the outrageous things that happen to most of us. I doubt that he has altogether and thus I suppose "Newspaper Days" is not so much an exact as an affectionate picture. His sense of shock is almost beautiful as he reads in a New York paper, at the beginning of his story about Notable Cops, that "fifty or sixty college graduates had been appointed to the metropolitan police force, and were being well spoken of by their superiors." His story of the newspaper artists of his early days is too jovial to be quite accurate, but I am afraid it is better that way, and you will remember it for the art-loving German who was ruined by the swarm of muralists setting off his new bar for meals and beer. He went down to Long Bridge, "climbed on the rail, fastened a long rope to it, looped the other end around his neck, swallowed a dose of arsenic, shot himself through the head, and then leaped or fell into the river."

H. L. Mencken is not a sternly exact reporter, but his memory and relish are vast and he is a good reporter. He is very probably a humane man, but he is not talking about that either, and so the picture you get finally is one of nonsense and much delight. I would call Mencken a peculiarly American article, not only for his labors in establishing the language and the mildly ribald history of the press; but for the place he stands in, as a force for a certain liberation at the time we were only beginning to wake up, as a healthy explosion on the whole field of letters, as an exact and original writer and a man whose intolerant courage was at the service of others at a time when it did much good in clearing the air. His book is a treasury of fact and fable without dull stretches, a genial book and full of life. But a book about the time of day and state of the country as he found it by anyone so stormily a part of the earlier days of publishing would be required reading, even if it were dull. And in the case of Henry Mencken I think that is unthinkable. I never care much if he's right: he has been a good man and he is a hell of a lot of fun.

OTIS FERGUSON

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The Chameleon Poet

Rainer Maria Rilke, by E. M. Butler. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Macmillan Company. 437 pages. $4.50.

THE POSTHUMOUS characteristic of the great poet is that he is never present at the ceremonies of honor held in his name: he evades his own obituaries almost as ferociously as he declines to inhabit his own biographies. Thus the biographer is forced to populate the biography with any number of mythological figures all of whom, in the partial dark of never perfect knowledge, could be mistaken for the subject who refuses to become an object. I am not really aware of any great poet on whose tail the stalking biographer has been able to shake salt. Slightly faded photographic albums of events in the life of Alfred Lord Tennyson have been compiled by gifted observers up to Harold Nicolson; Hart Crane had a brilliant memorial erected over his remains by the hand of Philip Horton. But invariably the biographer approaches the wheel of his subject with an axe in his hand; he wants to reduce the private life of the individual to a proposition of the ethical or the esthetical. Ultimately it is synonymous with the statement that all poets should be five feet eleven inches tall. John Keats said: "What delights the chameleon poet shocks the virtuous philosopher." The biographer, by seeking to submit the life of the individual to mathematical or mechanical interpretations, assumes the responsibilities of the philosopher. I suggest that fundamentally all biographers are shocked by their subjects. Thus the biographer is either in the act of violent recoil away from the great individual or in the act of too abject a genuflection. The interesting thing about Miss Butler's biography of Rilke is that it records the characteristically feminine gesture of retreating in the approach or recoiling in the act of genuflection.

Rilke, like Yeats, was a poet who assumed the singing robe with a positively imperial consciousness that the times were against it. Being poet was the trade of Yeats as it was the vocation of Rilke. For this reason I think Professor Butler misguided when she writes: "Rilke remains baffling partly because he lived in an age which did not think poetically and partly because he willed it so." First, all ages think "poetically" only if the poets of the period make them think poetically; second, Rilke willing the bafflement of his biographers is dangerously similar to a Rilke being baffled himself. In short I suggest that Rilke no more clearly understood the nature of the life that was continually decomposing in his actions, than his biographers understand that this "life" is not susceptible of any other perfect interpretation than the poems. Personally I believe that Rilke devoted a great deal of his sterile intervals to a kind of metaphysical dramatization of events and places that he knew or had known; this is the prerogative of the poet, whose poems are sometimes nothing more than these dramatizations given universal validity. But the point I desire to make is that the only time the poet sees home into the pattern of his individual existence is when he writes a poem. At all other times he is busy living his life rather than analyzing it. The analysis is the business of the biographer, who, instead of approaching the dead poet with the footrule of a theory in his hand, should, I believe, search rather for the equation that his life will have inscribed on the poet's writing hand.

Then, as the act of recoil away from the corpse, I observe the piquant air of self-congratulation with which Miss Butler removes the masks from several of the legendary Rilkes. She mentions only parenthetically ("he refused those opiates which would deaden his consciousness") the immense climax when Rilke, notwithstanding the pain, but conscious that the death his life had earned was at last upon him, rejected the morphia and received his death, as it were, standing. This was the act of a man who may or may not have understood his life but certainly understood his death. Nor can I see the necessity of exploding the minor myth that Rilke read none of the reviews of his work; he cultivated this myth sedulously, not, as I think, to aggrandize himself but to serve as symbol to the young poets who expire on a word of disapproval or depend too completely on applause. It was deliberate living.

But summarily I must say that this biography converts me to one obvious but unusual conviction, and this is that the life of Rilke, the biography as revelation, can only be written by a woman. But I do not think that Professor Butler's is the one.

GEORGE BARKER

Secret Agents

Secret History of the American Revolution, by Carl Van Doren. New York: The Viking Press. 548 pages. $3.75.

IN HIS SCHOLARLY "Divided Loyalties," published in 1933, Lewis Einstein gave a vivid picture of the ramifications, the success and failure, of the British secret service in Europe during the American Revolution. Carl Van Doren now throws a searchlight on the parallel activities of the British in America itself during the same period, and in doing so has written an interesting and important book; important, because in addition to an excellent synthesis of previously printed material, the book brings into print much significant documentary material not previously published.

The outstanding feature of "Secret History" is the story of Arnold's treason—how the approach was made, how the long extended correspondence was handled, the bargaining over the amount of the bribe, the apparent complicity of Arnold's wife, the activities and death of Major André. Here for the first time we have the full proof, document upon document, pieced together with the skill of a relentless, but fair, prosecuting attorney, of Arnold's sordidness and duplicity throughout this dramatic and momentous episode. It is not likely that anything in the way of new evidence or interpretation will materially enlarge or alter Van Doren's presentation.

The case of Arnold takes up about half the book. The other half deals with the attempts of the British to win over other Americans of greater or less importance. Generals Putnam, Schuyler, Gates, St. Clair, Sullivan and Parsons, and other Americans, were approached as hopeful prospects. But in dealing with these Van Doren in no sense acts as prosecutor. In the role of an impartial, intelligent judge, reviewing the evidence, he leaves it to his jury of readers to decide if any or all of the accused are blameworthy, making it clear, however, that, except in the case of some of the lesser figures, there is no proof that any of those approached accepted a bribe or even had a change of heart. I think that Van Doren unduly belittles the achieve-

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ments of General Charles Lee and is probably too charitable in his attitude toward General Schuyler. But it would take a couple of books, each as long and as well documented as "Secret History," to establish these points, if, indeed, they can be established.

The author consistently lays his evidence before the reader by extensive, though not overextended, quotations. This method can be forbidding, but, thanks to Van Doren's skillful handling, his history is no less readable, as well as far more satisfying, than the brilliant but mainly undocumented writings of Trevelyan. The documentation includes a valuable appendix containing the full text of ninety letters written by Arnold, André, General Sir Henry Clinton and others involved in the Arnold episode.

Ever since William L. Clements gave his remarkable collection of the German and British headquarters papers to the library at the University of Michigan which bears his name, scholars have wondered who would be given the golden opportunity of first exploiting the almost untapped resources of these documents. After reading Van Doren's book it is difficult to conceive that the library authorities could have made a happier choice.

BERNHARD KNOLLENBERG

Miss Bowen's Bouquet

Look at All Those Roses, by Elizabeth Bowen. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 329 pages. $2.50.

IN THE LIVES of most good writers there comes a time (as they stand poised on the brink of wide recognition) when it would seem wise for their publishers to assume particular discretion. Nothing is more necessary to a writer than encouragement and praise, but resounding assertions in large print, arresting the eye before the book is opened, can be not only embarrassing to an author, but may serve to antagonize a reviewer. On reading that someone is "by way of becoming the finest writer in England," possessing a "talent worthy of comparison with such masters as Chekhov and Katherine Mansfield," the critic is liable to accept such acclaim as a challenge. It is a pity that the tendency in publishing seems to be to allow books less and less to stand or fall on their own merits—a custom, until the present war, always employed in France.

Beyond the fact that in "Look at All Those Roses" Elizabeth Bowen's characters are taken exclusively from the middle and upper-middle-class strata of English society, and that, like the author of "The Doll's House" and "Je Ne Parle Pas Francais," Miss Bowen writes with uncanny insight of little girls and governesses, she and Katherine Mansfield seem to have little in common. Where the latter was in love with life and her creations, the former has more of the studied coldness of the intellectual observer. Living in an age when the English intelligentsia are preoccupied with the grotesque—rediscovering Heronymous Bosch and engrossed in Kafka—it is not surprising, perhaps, to find the Irish writer most at home in situations that are, or which she contrives to render, macabre and sinister.

In "The Apple Tree" a schoolgirl commits suicide, leaving her friend haunted for life; in another story a house is left empty for years because of a murder once committed there in a bath. In a number of homes there lurks someone with a definitely "murky" past. "The Disinherited," virtually a short novel, and "Reduced," are founded on past scandal, and share almost identical "plots": the face of the sinister chauffeur in one and that of the governess in the other have been "seen somewhere before"—in the newspapers, connected with half-forgotten crimes. Few of these stories are easy reading; they lack the perfect composition, and the prose the simplicity, of Mansfield. An inclination to overwrite, to be just too subtle, too clever, tends to make Miss Bowen a more "difficult" writer than she need be. In "The Tommy Crans," the volume's first story and probably a very early one (a pity they are not dated), such an opening as:

> Herbert's feet, from dangling so long in the tram, had died of cold in his boots; he stamped the couple of coffins on blue-and-buff mosaic. In the Tommy Crans' cloak-room the pegs were too high—Uncle Arthur cocked H. M. S. Terrible for him over a checked Ulster. . . .

is an affected, overcharged piece of writing. Great concentration, in fact, is demanded of the reader throughout this volume, for Miss Bowen is an author of mood—an impressionist, getting her effects by a few bold strokes of a thick brush; to comprehend completely you must stand at a distance, and meditate. A whole novel could be written from the sometimes too scanty data offered; the characters —frigid, inarticulate English—remain for the most part in shadow, their relations to one another implied rather than stated; the dialogue is inconclusive, realistic, though rarely as revealing as that in the work of Dorothy Richardson, an author whose work is reminiscent of Miss Bowen's.

It is not the incidents, the drama, or the content of these stories which are important, but rather the level of the tone in which they are written. No character will remain in the memory as do the houses their colorless owners live in; you can see no human beings as you can smell their rooms, corridors, possessions; the fog, the damp, the rare sunlight (as in the title story), and the gardens of England surrounding them. And here lies Miss Bowen's strength: she is a master at describing the furniture of life; if you are but on nodding acquaintance with her people, you have been allowed to linger long in all their private demesnes. It is, moreover, by such flashes of observation as the following that you will learn more of what they really are, and of what Elizabeth Bowen is. Of a dressmaker summoned to work in a country house: "She was of that difficult class that has to have trays all the time." Of a child in tears: "There is something about an abject person that raises cruelty in the kindest breast"; and of the mother seeking to dam its tears: "She was one of those women who have an unfailing sense of what not to say, and say it." And finally, in "A Walk in the Woods," a gem wherein is revealed an irrevocable, frightening aspect of civilization in our time: "There is no poetry for the middle-class woman in her middle years. Nature's disturbing music is silent for her; her short phase of instinctive life is over. She is raising, forcing upward the children she has, and driving her man on."

Elizabeth Bowen may not yet be a worthy successor to the greatest masters of the short story, but neither the public nor her publishers need worry: her talent is well able to stand on its own merits; and her books, boosted or banned, will be bought, borrowed and read. JAMES STERN

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Fan Dancer for Ruin

Time Exposure, by Cecil Beaton. With a Commentary and Captions by Peter Quennell. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 136 pages. $3.75.

TURN a poet, critical, loose and see where you get. Here is Mr. Peter Quennell writing the text for a volume of Mr. Cecil Beaton's photographs through the ages. That means 1923 to 1940 in point of fact, with hammy originals harping on obvious originalities (glib dramatists in a baroque nutshell, and worse instances of the third-rate) and vulgar exhibitions deriving from a boredom that in turn derived from slow glands and small conceptions of society, religion and art, not to mention the problems of personal grandeur, inherited privilege and individual Freudian displacements. Mr. Quennell goes at his subject tooth and nail, the tooth incisive and pointed, the nail coming clean, as they say in Hollywood, gory red for having dug the insides out of somebody or other, all of them notables as it were, few of them not the Higher Riffraff.

This text, accompanying the photographs like a giddy lute, smart and on the key nevertheless, and supplying the necessary captions, recounts the states of the world for the short years denoted there. We read of Mr. Beaton's earlier inclinations, his passion, considered now by him perverse, for the romantic quality of the artificial and the charm of the second-rate; and his enjoyment of the shadowy border line between "good" and "bad" taste—less perhaps from that aristocratic pleasure in displeasing to which esthetes of the latter decades of the nineteenth century attached a somewhat exaggerated and snobbish value than from "an instinctive affection for the world of the theatre with its glitter and make-believe."

Seventeen years have passed, however, and Mr. Beaton is still taking photographs. But we are told that the air of unreality is no longer imposed by the photographer himself—it is implicit in his subject. Gaping third-floor rooms are in evidence daily, as London goes; we see the gas-stove, wash-basin and a festoon of snapshots around the mantelpiece; a Victorian armchair straddles a bomb crater; gritty explosion dust is over everything. And thus, we are told, has actuality caught up with and outdistanced fantasy.

To my mind this is the same old nonsense that war brings to our human minds and considerations. The photographs toward the end of this volume are not really one whit better than those earlier. A cat sitting in the midst of the household ruins is touching *per se*, of course, bless that little heart! and so is a child in an iron bed, looking vague in the eyes and holding a distraught rag doll. But the tragedy of London raids will not, I trust, mislead me into thinking that Mr. Beaton's art has leapt beyond his past. Indeed I am not sure that the photographs of Sitwells and duchesses, of "celebrities" sometimes glamorous and sometimes odorous, or both, of touristic ruins in several continents capable of the exotic—and erotic often—tinge and rumor, are not much better, more convincingly bona-fide, effective with a life of silly and busy decadence that the camera recorded, than are these plausible disasters of war-torn streets and houses, which are the same pretty much in any country where the bombing from the air goes on. From such scenes the pictures taken must all turn on a matter of selection. Mr. Beaton's selections seem to be mostly obvious. They are about what many of the sitters for the earlier pictures would have selected. I mean, of course, those personages with that somewhat smudged passion and mascara about their eyes, as if mindful of Miss Tallulah Bankhead, or those greedy, fashionable and androgynous beings, who are spread over the earlier pages and who have been uncommonly well aided in the reaches of their exhibitionism by the photographer's natural taste for their unnatural decline.

The scope of this Beaton collection is widish in a way: personalities, beauties, backgrounds, travel, ballet—in the Silver Age of the Ballet—and the past year of war. On the whole it has the profundity of talent combined with flippancy of intention, or shall we say, with some congenital shallowness considerably mixed with charm and the snobbery of British getting on. I might say perhaps that we have here a display that both brightens and maligns the English depth, continuity and friendship, a sideshow with its own significance and fetid costly scent, an invitation, if you like, to Hitler and invasion. For the most part, other races—the despised Italians for example—provide the means for the rococo and overobvious culture presented. And the slime of facility with which this domestic super-décor is dripped about among notable nobodies has undoubtedly its potency. Higher vulgarities are always more elusive than higher distinctions.

And in general, Picasso, Tchehlichew and a very few others more or less excepted, nobody in the book amounts to a row of pins, though the pictures of the king and queen do present problems in photography, considering, as Lear would say, the thick rotundity of the world. Once we declare war, of course, everybody in the book will be wonderful or else we should be pro-German. I say, nevertheless, and without a single shoulder chip, that photography is photography, and brains and character are brains and character, and great England, England, whatever her Grace may have remarked.

STARK YOUNG

The Kite Indoors

O you that rose above the praying roofs
Beyond the steeple and the signal towers
Riding the wind on footing with a cloud
Infringing on the region of the sun,
To fall like Lucifer across the light;

Now in a corner of the vestibule,
Too much too little of the sky let in,
Too large for comfort in this narrow place,
Cling to the wall's face, staring into darkness,
Letting the last red drops of brightness fall.

Now the lean ribs and the crossed spine appear
On which the spread shape droops that was all flame
Against the sovereign sun, creature whose single-
Hearted purpose was never to be here,
Power that went from us so easily.

What was most wayward has come most to rest.
The door is barred against all hope of distance
That in the hilly window shrinks like all
Hope in still season of uncertain March,
Its winds and whims a mouse-intaken breath.

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Sea Power in the World Struggle

I. "We, Too, Are an Island"

CAPTAIN GRENFELL'S BOOK on sea power deals with problems of policy and strategy which are of vital importance to this country as well as his own.

His argument is simple. The British Empire rose to its greatness through sea power; the valor and enterprise of British seamen commanded the sea-lanes of the world, and the fighting spirit of the navy brought defeat to the navies of continental Europe:

> The Briton thinks instinctively of his navy as an attacking force. It was natural for Nelson with twenty-seven ships to attack the French and Spanish with thirty-three, and for St. Vincent with fifteen to attack the Spanish with twenty-seven.

No large armies were ever raised until 1914: the navy was the senior service and the first line of defense, with the army simply a secondary weapon caring for "the home defense of the British Isles and of the overseas colonies and possessions." All the British expeditions on the Continent during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had been carried out with limited numbers, and even Wellington's campaign in Spain did not involve more than 30,000 men at a time. The army, supported by the navy, was "to put in train limited, eccentric, offensive operations, on the Peninsula model, designed to encourage revolt and resistance and to open up 'bleeding points' on exposed enemy extremities." The keynotes of British strategy in Elizabethan and Napoleonic days were "economy of manhood and a reliance on sea power [which] by preserving Britain from overstrain while the greater part of Europe was in violent upheaval, left her at the final peace conference in 1815 in a position to speak with a voice of unrivaled authority among the emperors and kings."

Captain Mahan's great work, "The Influence of Sea Power on History," made a profound stir abroad, especially in Great Britain and Germany, and Captain Grenfell pays due tribute to this and to the succeeding volumes on the "Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire." The German Emperor was so impressed by Mahan's first volume that he wrote: "I am just now not reading but devouring Captain Mahan's book and am trying to learn it by heart. . . . It is on board all my ships and constantly quoted by my captains and officers."

It undoubtedly did open up to the Kaiser a vista of a Greater Germany which influenced profoundly his determination to have a powerful fleet as well as a powerful army. With these Germany's place in the sun should be assured. The Kiel Canal was completed in 1895, naval-building laws were passed in 1898 and 1900, which led to the armament race ending in war. In Captain Grenfell's opinion: "The conclusion cannot be avoided that the publication of Mahan's books on seapower played an important part in bringing on the war between Germany and Britain."

As a result of the growing power of Germany, Great Britain and France settled their main differences and the Entente was established. The author gives us a remarkably interesting account of how two men developed this entente to a point which finally led to the dispatch of millions of British troops to France and the loss of 700,000 British lives: "In the Entente agreement of 1904, Britain had promised France, in certain circumstances, her diplomatic support against Germany, but no more than that." However, in 1906, Sir Edward Grey, British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, stated to the French Ambassador that he believed "France could expect armed assistance from Britain, as well as diplomatic support in the event of a German attack," and that he had no objections to staff conversations being undertaken. These conversations began within six days of the original interview. To quote the author:

> A noteworthy feature of these transactions is the speed, indeed the precipitation, with which they were conducted. The decisions reached were of an importance that cannot be exaggerated. They brought about a revolution in Britain's method of waging war, leading, as they eventually did, to the adoption of conscription and the raising of national armies on a scale that had never before been dreamed of. Yet those epoch-making decisions that were to have such a tremendous effect on British national life were hurried through in six short days.

Another remarkable feature was the fact that the Cabinet was not informed: "Also it does not appear certain that Grey had even discussed the matter beforehand with the Prime Minister." The latter, Campbell-Bannerman, was by his previous record opposed to any major military commitments on the Continent.

The navy, through Sir John Fisher, First Sea Lord, was bitterly opposed to the plan. "[Fisher's] idea for the proper utilization of the British army was that the navy should throw it ashore at some unexpected part of the enemy's coast whence it could take the enemy army in flank or rear." Such views did not prevail, but little progress was made on definite plans for an expeditionary force until August, 1910, when General Henry Wilson became director of military operations. He was an ardent Francophile with a great admiration for the French army, and through his driving force the plans proceeded for the British Expeditionary Force and its participation in the First World War.

It is interesting to speculate on what would have been the outcome, had the places of Grey and Wilson been filled with men who were opposed to major military involvement on the Continent and adhered to the long established policy of using the army as contemplated by Fisher—a policy of "economy of manhood and a reliance on sea power."

The author touches rather briefly on the economic factor involved. This is a subject of vast future importance to Britain and to ourselves in the present war. Few, if any, writers have ever developed the subject of the economy of

[1] The publication of "Sea Power," by Captain Russell Grenfell, R.N. (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 244 pages, $2), brings to the fore once again the question of maritime power versus land power and the problem of Britain's retaining her island privileges in the face of a Hitler-dominated Continent. In the two reviews which follow, Rear Admiral H. E. Yarnell and Samuel Grafton discuss Captain Grenfell's arguments.—THE EDITORS

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naval forces in comparison with an army. The relative cheapness of naval war enabled Britain through past centuries to end up in far better financial condition than her enemies. As for ourselves, in the First World War the United States spent about seventeen billions on the army and three billions on the navy.

It is in lives, however, that land warfare is so destructive. On this subject the author states:

> . . . the fearful butchery of the war had of itself rendered the British people additionally ill equipped to combat the moral anemia which followed. For great numbers of the best men of a whole generation had been killed off on the battlefields, and the country was disproportionately under the control of the less good material that had remained behind.

This book merits profound consideration from those charged with the national safety and welfare of the United States. We, too, are an island, bounded on the east by the Atlantic, and on the west by the Pacific. The defense of our nation depends primarily on the navy. This navy must be one that can prevent any enemy from crossing either ocean with a military expedition, and that can maintain our just rights in any part of the world. Our basic policy should also be one of "economy of manhood and a reliance on sea power." It should be one of a supreme navy and a small but highly efficient army. There should be no dreams of sending millions of men abroad again to fight on foreign soil. Our contribution in the present struggle should be with the navy and air forces. And given an adequate navy with its attendant air force, it will ensure us victory through command of the sea.

The establishment of a stable peace at the end of this war will be vastly difficult. If we pursue a wise policy, depend on the navy and air for our military contribution, avoid expending billions of dollars on an army of millions of men, avoid the slaughter of our best manhood on foreign soil, spend wisely and conserve national morale, we will be in a position at the peace conference to speak "with a voice of unrivaled authority among the emperors and kings."

H. E. YARNELL

II. Run, Britannia!

CAPTAIN GRENFELL, late of the Royal Navy, says in a word that England ought to get to hell out of the continent of Europe and stay out. He sees England relying on her sea power to guard her lifelines, depending on her "natural aptitude" as a maritime nation, standing guard while the Nazi fever "burns itself out," and harassing the Nazis, if at all, only by eccentric marine offensives and feints. The Captain is a solid sea dog. He is not glib; he is neither cheap nor nasty; he documents his points carefully with frequent historic and economic references; he does not at all sound like a mush-mouth America First speech or a slick New York Daily News editorial; his play is that of the overwhelmingly "practical" mind; he creates, in this book, a mental climate of practicality. He shows how England's attempts to be a land power have often resulted disastrously, from Napoleon's day on; and he gloats over Drake, and Nelson, too, over Sir Thomas Cochrane's brilliant coastal raids against Napoleon, and over the effective British blockade of Napoleon's Conti-

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nental System. So far, so good. Then, because of his complete inability to see Nazism as a world political problem, rather than a world strategic problem alone, he quietly falls apart, crumbles, and has obligingly beat himself into a powder by the time we reach the last of his gnarled pages.

Professor Edward Mead Earle, of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, has been conducting an important seminar, this last year, on the problem of civilian overseership of military strategy. I would commend Captain Grenfell's book to Professor Earle as a kind of Exhibit A for his seminar, as a complete justification of his thesis that "war is too important a business to be left to soldiers" —or sailors. Here, opportunely, we are provided with a horrible example of where straight-out professional military and naval thinking lead, in a period of wars between mobilized populations. Captain Grenfell believes that for England to take to the defensive is purely a technical decision; a "best way to win" decision; a mere choice among alternates. Actually, it is the assumption of a political line, a line of surrender, by a man who is extremely proud that he is not a politician. Captain Mahan, our own great expert, whom Captain Grenfell quotes copiously, understood this very well. Among those Mahan dicta which Captain Grenfell does not cite, is the prescient observation of 1902 that the defensive "appeals to the conservatism which is dominant in the well-to-do." Captain Mahan did what Captain Grenfell fails to do: he studied the politics of the potential enemy as well as his armaments. Mahan declared flatly, in 1910, that we must recognize those military advantages which both Germany and Japan obtain by "submergence of the individual in the mass"; he warned that this had become an important military factor.

Captain Grenfell beats himself to ideological death against his granite ignorance of these political factors. The level of his understanding is revealed by his discovery of "a striking resemblance between the condition of France in the early years of the French Revolution and that of Germany today." The poser which all sea-worshipers have to face is the question why a Germany dominant on the Continent will not at once begin to outbuild the British navy. Grenfell tries to answer this in infantile political terms: She will be too busy watching Russia. (Ooof!) And the peoples of Europe will be too discontented to lend their energies to naval construction. Check. A few pages later on, however, Captain Grenfell is wondering why Nazism ought to be opposed at all if, as is "possible," Germany can bring about a "beneficial unity" on the Continent, giving to all Europeans "reasonable satisfaction." But if European "discontent" were ended, then Germany could presumably build a great fleet, by Grenfell's own argument. By this time Grenfell is in difficulties and breathing hard, proving that we ought not to oppose Nazism because it cannot control the Continent, and also because it can. He beats a strategic retreat to Napoleon, who was ultimately destroyed by England's sea power; Grenfell cites those valiant ships which carried Wellesley to Portugal. But Wellesley actually landed, and encamped and fought on land; does Grenfell advocate a similar landing against Hitler? Not at all; he remains the pure sea-worshiper. England must rely on her sea power but not use it as Wellesley did. She must, he says, learn from Napoleon that a superior sea power means victory. But will not Hitler

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learn from Napoleon, too? Is it possible for those conscious of Hitler's bitterness against the English blockade of 1914-18, and of Hitler's drive for autarchy, to believe that Hitler is not acutely aware of the meaning of sea power? Here Grenfell, now panting, backs into metaphysics: It "may be that Fortune, in distributing her favors, takes care not to endow any one nation with the sea sense and the land sense simultaneously."

But he admits that both Japan and Italy have the "sea sense"; yet he cannot see that they are bound up with Germany in a worldwide fascist alliance embracing island states and sea states as well as land states. He paints a pretty picture of England giving up her continental trade and relying on her distant markets, protected by her sea power; he forgets Japan and forgets Hitler's speeches about colonies and access to raw materials; he pictures an England content to let Hitler have the Continent, but fails utterly to prove that Hitler would be content to have only the Continent. But above all, he fails to sense that his policy would give the Continent to Hitler without any return whatever; that it would remove the last obstacle to continental ownership; that it would end the revolutionary upsurge in Europe; that it would mean giving up, for no purpose, an alliance with 250,000,000 potential revolutionaries, whose hope is England. As a political infant, Grenfell ignores the meaning of the Chinese democratic upsurge; he cannot see the outlines of the new English-American-Chinese organism; thus he confronts a world problem with a parochial solution, a mechanical application of a sea-power formula taken from the Napoleonic era, the infancy of the Industrial Revolution.

His inability to see the big pattern of events leads him to an interesting slip. He carefully refrains from praising Hitler in any way, but when he reaches page 194, and is referring to the victims of three recent aggressions, he does so in these terms: "The Finns, like the Spanish Communists and the Chinese, were almost undefended." That is all Loyalist Spain meant to a man who would give us a formula for eternal safety against Hitler.

SAMUEL GRAFTON

Epithalamy

Now you lay you down to sleep.
I pray that future times may keep
Your children and grandchildren free
From all such spectral company
As plucks your troubled sheets tonight
And mixes with your new delight
Terror from another shore:
The restless images of war.

I know that in your dreams there move
Putting the taint upon your love
Forms of hate and fear that keep
Unwelcome company with sleep:
These vanish with our western sun.

When the European night is done
Lovers waking find with dread
The terror still about the bed.

THOMAS RIGGS JR.

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The Patient Foot-Soldier

Salt of the Earth, by Joseph Wittlin. New York: Sheridan House. 314 pages. $2.50.

"SALT OF THE EARTH" took Joseph Wittlin ten years to write, and for a change it is not that kind of book. It is the simple, vivid and quietly passionate story of an unknown Polish soldier in the early days of the last war, the Polish Everyman, the eternal fall guy. The author is now at work on two more volumes to complete a trilogy, to be called "The Saga of the Patient Foot-Soldier," which will carry his Unknown Soldier through the war. This should by rights make the book an epic, with all an epic's sandbag-and-old-historical-documents character, but so far it is simply not that sort of writing. It is an intimate and always ironic picture of the war, not on a canvas of titanic battles and vast strategic movements, but on the smallest canvas imaginable—Peter Neviadomski.

Peter is a little man with a good strong chest and a slow honest peasant's brain, his whole life occupied with carrying luggage in a Galician railway station and dreaming of an official railway cap and some widow with enough dowry to buy him a mousetrap with real cheese in it. The war picks him up, packs him off to some place called Hungary, claps him into a second-hand uniform and prepares him to die for a senile and foolish old man named Franz Josef, whom Peter has never seen but whom he regards with a decent peasant adoration. He doesn't understand the war (nor, the author says with a nice irony, did Franz Josef), doesn't understand the world, doesn't understand anything larger than his hut and his jerkwater railway station, but he had a personal conscription notice from the Emperor saying come, and Peter came.

In a really magnificent beginning, the book focuses the war deliberately on Peter, for all the world like a good movie opening. Wittlin's camera first picks out the ominous black double-headed eagle of Austria-Hungary, shifts to the council of bewhiskered incompetents around Franz Josef as he signs the proclamation of war, moves outward to reactions throughout the vast empire, and slowly comes to rest on Peter in his tiny Huzul village, where it remains. Only toward the end of the book does a character as central as Peter appear, Regimental Sergeant-Major Bachmatiuk, the incredibly perfect military machine (he gets himself out of bed in the morning with whispered commands). Even he, although he may emerge in subsequent volumes as a secondary protagonist, seems to be no more in this volume than a brilliantly executed counterweight to Peter, the flint and steel to Peter's tinder.

When Wittlin began "Salt of the Earth" in 1925, his principal literary achievement was a translation of the "Odyssey" into Polish hexameters. Out of his own experiences as an infantryman in the Austrian armies during the last war, an overwhelming amount of study and research (which doesn't spring out and nip you, but is there nevertheless) and a human sympathy so broad and pervasive that it enabled him to jump the gap of understanding between his own reactions and the simple Huzul peasant's, Wittlin has created a novel to rank easily with the best war literature of our time. Probably Poland's foremost modern writer, Wittlin is completely unknown in this

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country. Now that an American edition of his book has finally been issued, with a good if somewhat jerky translation by Pauline de Chary, local citizens will have a chance to discover not only that a Polish literature exists, but that Joseph Wittlin is one of contemporary Europe's foremost talents; a writer with the one-in-a-million combination of a powerful, mature mind and a clean, unpretentious and eminently readable style.

It is no fault of Wittlin's that between the Polish publication of his book in 1935 and this American edition, the last World War has taken on so carefree and mock-heroic an air that we think of it the way we think of Horatius at the Bridge or Pickett's Charge. A newer and tougher war has turned up to give the literature of the old one a quick shove into fairyland, and the amiable and bumbling Peter Neviadomski is as atypical of the new warrior driving into Russia as his senile, dribbling old Emperor is unlike today's deadlier Austrian tyrant. Wittlin, an exile from Poland in 1939 and France in 1940, is now in America working over what the Nazis left him of the two subsequent manuscripts for the trilogy. No reader of "Salt of the Earth" can help hoping that when those are finished Wittlin will turn his brilliant and ironic talents to the new and somewhat different Patient Foot-Soldiers of this war.

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

That Man from Kansas

William Allen White: The Man from Emporia, by Everett Rich. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc. 374 pages. $3. William Allen White of Emporia, by Frank C. Clough. New York: Whittlesey House. 265 pages. $2.50.

NEITHER OF THESE BOOKS does the job, the job, that is, of adequately sizing up William Allen White and evaluating the part he has played in American life for more than half a century. That should surprise no one, for the biographer who will some day label the man and make it stick will have written as well a revealing social and political history of the United States. It won't be easy, and not alone because Mr. White has been so active and lived so long. It will be as much because he has been so many things for so many shifting reasons, and, in politics at least, some things that he appeared not to be at the time. In his jammed-full lifetime he has changed from a thoroughgoing bigot to a man with an essentially decent and progressive viewpoint; from a smug reactionary and an irresponsible Negro-baiter to one of the most effective enemies the Ku Klux Klan ever had, and beyond that to a champion of all civil liberties. But those are merely the more simple transitions.

Mr. Rich's failure to interpret these shifts in White's career is one of the major weaknesses of his book. The man from Emporia is obviously something of a hero to him, and while this biography is no deliberate job of whitewashing, it is completely unrealistic in the all-important matter of motives. White was born (1868) and grew up in frontier Kansas. He developed a lot of bounce, shrewdness and imagination, but practically no illusions. Kansans were still fighting the Civil War in a rather serious way and politics ranked up near farming as a state industry. If White learned his way around early it wasn't merely because he was bright. His mother was a Northern Abolitionist and his

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father was a brash Democrat in a Republican stronghold. White became a Republican and has always remained one, but Mr. Rich has left untouched the ready mass of material that might explain White's almost constant tie-up with the most reactionary political elements in his state. At the age of thirty-three, White could insist that boss rule was "the best system of government there is." And that position and all it implies are probably the real key to his political purposes up to an embarrassingly short time ago.

Even today it is fair to ask, "How much of a liberal is William Allen White really?" Mr. Rich's book doesn't show it, but there is good reason to believe that White became a Bull Mooser when he saw which way the wind was blowing. He was quite a Woodrow Wilson fan, too, but not at election time. And as Roosevelt neatly remarked in 1936, White was for him three and one-half years out of every four. Certainly the man isn't a determined progressive; even from the data presented here, though viewed somewhat more objectively, it seems more likely that he has always been able to recognize a bandwagon when he saw one. Once on it he has done valuable work for important causes. But what does whooping it up for the good cause amount to against the fact that you have to couple White with Harding, Coolidge, Hoover and Landon? And it isn't easy to forget that he has helped draft every Republican platform (except possibly one) since 1912. Well, that's politics for you.

Both Mr. White and his biographer come off a good deal better when the political record of the one and the interpretative omissions of the other are left behind. White as the able, kindly, small-town editor of The Emporia Gazette is an attractive, even admirable character. As an editorial writer he has always had punch and good sense: many pieces that he wrote forty years ago still have the freshness of a slap on the shoulder followed by a friendly chat. A half-century ago, when most country sheets were poorly printed, limited in coverage and badly written, White was putting out a paper notable for good taste and a keen sense of responsibility to the community. In those respects his standards have seldom been lowered. White the father, husband, town citizen and employer is a gracious, friendly character. Mr. Rich has emphasized these sides of the man and here he has been successful—sympathetic but not lush. Mr. Clough's book runs to casual portraiture and the personality sketch. He is The Emporia Gazette's managing editor and loyal to the point of hero-worship. So you expect little and get no more, and in any case Mr. Rich covers the same ground using the same material.

William Allen White came into national prominence in 1896 with his famous editorial "What's the Matter with Kansas?" It was so reactionary in tone, so indifferent to the need of reform in depression-wrecked Kansas, that Mark Hanna used it in his fight to elect McKinley and break the Populists. White today would be incapable of writing that editorial. He is that rare fish in public life: a man who remained completely reactionary beyond the age of thirty but came to value democracy more as the years piled up. Some of the record isn't pretty and White has often publicly regretted the worst pages of it. Today, at any rate, when he squares off, he fights for the things that count. And that's more than can be said for most of the men he came up with.

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The Poet at Bay

Savage Landor, by Malcolm Elwin. New York: The Macmillan Company. 519 pages. $4.

WE HAVE NEEDED a new biography of Landor. Sidney Colvin's spirited study in the English Men of Letters series is based on Forster's big book and though Forster did a better job than Mr. Elwin indicates—he is never gracious to his predecessors—Forster was probably not quite the man to do the best possible Life. But unfortunately Mr. Elwin is even less fitted for the work. He is, to be sure, painstaking and thorough and for many new facts we are in his debt. He tells for the first time the full story of Landor's unhappy attempt to develop his Welsh estate and he gives us what is even more important, the details of the sordid and wonderful Yescombe incident, Landor's last mad, wrong-headed generosity which ended in his forced flight from England at eighty-three to seek in Florence a cruel refuge with his hostile family. But apart from fact, Mr. Elwin's book is most unsatisfactory and it is a sad irony that one of the great masters of English prose should be subject to such prosiness as his latest biographer commands.

Mr. Elwin's prose is verbose and without sinew, yet it often becomes so violent as to be meaningless; it is perhaps only bad taste to say that the memoirs of even a contemptible person "ooze the pus of malice," but it is sheer nonsense to say that Wordsworth's selfishness "shriveled his soul into a nerveless scab." We can scarcely trust the literary opinions of a writer who defines satire as "guying the work of others" or as "a facile cleverness at the expense of others." When, in order to explain what Southey meant when he advised Landor that in marriage "*rest* is the object to be sought," Mr. Elwin gives us a disquisition of nearly two pages on the history and psychology of Christian marriage, we can only wonder what his sense of proportion is. And we can only marvel at his notions of words, of society and of human beings when in the course of this digression he speaks of Christ's concern for the position of women in "a capitalist state" and observes that "genius flourishes to flower in the soil of emotional disturbance" and that "a wife passionately desired stimulates the sexual impulse." Mr. Elwin says too much and too little; it is chronology rather than understanding that shapes his facts and the result is that Landor's ninety strenuous years stand before us with scarcely any significance at all.

It is a misfortune that Mr. Elwin's book is not better, for a good book on Landor would make it easier for our time to have the pleasure of admiring a remarkable man. Landor's character was of a kind that Stendhal and Shakespeare might have collaborated to conceive. He had the boyish chivalry and pride that Stendhal admired and possessed; he had Stendhal's hatred of a vulgar age and he loved nobility of motive and manner. He was ready to stake anything on a point of honor and he ruined himself by generosity and willfulness. He said of his long old age that it was like Lear's, and so it was. Like Lear, he raged and domineered and gave away his kingdom to his children; his sons and daughter, whom he had adored, denied him sustenance and were encouraged in their cruelty by their mother. But outside his family he found more than one

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Cordelia and there were always Kents to watch over him. Like Lear, he raged against injustice, though with him hatred of oppression was of long standing and not, as with Lear, of sudden growth. He had great gifts of ferocity and of tenderness. He was great enough for tragedy to strike him but he had that other mark of the magnanimous spirit which Stendhal so admired: he had gayety. Leslie Stephen, unable to understand how tragedy and gayety could exist together, dismissed Landor as an irresponsible schoolboy; it was a mistake unworthy of Stephen.

As an artist Landor was capable of great perfection and many failures. A large number of his dialogues are dull or pointless and his verse is usually known, on the whole justly, only for the shorter pieces or for certain lovely passages in the longer poems. As we read his best work now, what is likely to strike us—after we get over the first shock of the chastity of both his prose and his verse—is how much weight and value his words have as words, how fresh and unhandled they seem. His style was shaped in the eighteenth century and he refined the rhetoric of his youth by his passionate knowledge of the classics; he therefore knew how to manage the period and from that art come his best effects. For him the sentence, in prose or verse, was never a mere box to hold his words, but something organic, a means of organizing words so that they should have the relation, the isolation or the emphasis they needed for their fullest force. He therefore relied less upon metaphor than our poets now feel is necessary; perhaps a greater knowledge of Landor might convince us that we have estimated the value of the metaphor too high and the value of the poetic sentence too low.

LIONEL TRILLING

The Long State

Tarheels, by Jonathan Daniels. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 347 pages. $3.

A SIGNIFICANT INDEX of the modern critical temper, writing down its judgments as it runs, is that this book by Jonathan Daniels, way and away his best job, has been fairly generally ignored. It is a book about a state, the state of North Carolina, and it is full of good sense and able judgments about America and the American way of life: which means that it must be put aside in favor of that umteenth book about how France was betrayed, or that stream-of-consciousness novel about two flag-pole sitters and a bearded lady on a raft.

There is not much anyone can do about it, except to urge this book upon those who still have an inclination toward the domestic and who would like to know what life in America is like. It is not a profound book, and Mr. Daniels is not saving anybody or anything; and if you like prophecies, or blueprints of the future, it is not the book for you. Its audience must be limited to those who still believe that the center of our national gravity is not France or Norway, not England or Yugoslavia, but forty-eight states more or less like North Carolina.

It is what is ticketed a "regional" book, of course, whereas a similar book about the Bronx, for some mysterious reason, wouldn't be. People like old Buck Duke appear in its pages, and the shrewd barber who founded

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the largest insurance company for Negroes in the world, and there are other people like lintheads and tobacco-planters and mountaineers. It would have been hard for Mr. Daniels not to write a good book about North Carolina, which is one of the most colorful states in the Union, but he brings to his task a knowledge that cuts much deeper than that displayed in "A Southerner Discovers the South" and the frequently superficial feature-writer's reporting that went into "A Southerner Discovers New England." His chapter on the town of Gastonia, for example, might stand as a covering essay for the whole of the industrial cotton-mill South, and at least one passage from his comments on eating and drinking insists upon quotation:

At its most romantic, the praise of native corn liquor always belonged to the school of the fox who lost his tail pointing to taillessness as perfection. At its best, aged in home-sized kegs which could be purchased at most of the chain stores, corn liquor was a potable drink full of the mule's heels. Gentlemen exchanged private systems for reducing the shock to the palate, which extended all the way from the introduction of dried fruits into the liquor to advanced chemical procedures. But at their worst, corn liquor and monkey rum (which in North Carolina was the distilled syrup of sorghum cane) were concoctions taken stoically, with retching and running eyes, for the effect beyond the first fusel-oil belch. There was certainly a democracy in drinking then. Rich and poor drank with the same gasping. Indeed, when a death by gunshot wound resulted in the relation of the details of a party in one of the state's richest houses, it came out that before the gun went off they had been drinking corn whiskey and chasing it down with near beer.

Little else can be said about a book like this without falling into guff or without quibbling about minor points which do not really matter. I can't though, for the life of me, understand what Mr. Daniels has against the mountains of western North Carolina: the mere sight of them makes him feel grouchy. But, in any case, Mr. Daniels has brought off a difficult job with admirable success and it is to be hoped that his book will be widely read. The general series, of which it is the second volume, appearing under the Dodd, Mead imprint and called The Sovereign State Series, promises to be the very best of its kind.

HAMILTON BASSO

Ridgely Torrence's Poems

Poems, by Ridgely Torrence. New York: The Macmillan Company. 121 pages. $1.75.

THE POEMS in this collection by Ridgely Torrence afford peculiar pleasure in this hour. It takes some doing, these days, to maintain belief "in the three names of Love, Light and your Divine Humanity"; but Mr. Torrence has what it takes—

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But the light at light's heart, the unfading, the light without shadow. * * *

And where, near by or far off, or under what dome
Is the great good place? Is there any? Sure harbor and home?

Yes, this light that falls in the darkness on land and sea meadow,
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lary or succumbing to current political hysteria; ugliness cannot make him ugly, nor fashion emulous. The spirit is pacific because the poet, having seen through the wars without and fought through the wars within, understands, from experience, the value and meaning of peace:

> I hear in the night the echoing trouble of multiple drums;
> Flutes lift their piercing fountains; a shadowy army comes,
> The soldiers, the sailors, the banners and the brave,
> For we have had a victory and they have had a grave.
> ("Peace.")

Or

> When the foe is scattered,
> Time will heap the cost,
> And the victor, shattered,
> Know that he has lost.
> ("Harvest Home.")

Or

> Is earth's way dark? Then darker, darker far
> Are ways that turn aside from pity;
> The ways of those who take the sword
> And on the victim build their city.
> ("On Storm King Edge.")

Reading the poems in this book, one must admire the poet's serenity, candor, trueness, devotion. His line is always clear and musical, the tone sure, the accent right. This clarity gives Mr. Torrence's work a satisfactory timelessness; he can be modern without being modish; neither is he unaware of the bardic tradition. This tradition imputes no reproach to the poet if he is called, at times, "inspirational," at others, "visionary," or "dreamer." It is a tradition in which the general may prevail over the particular; it permits occasional vagueness, along with largeness, of mood or image; it skirts, at its lower levels, oratory or rhetoric; at its higher reaches, it approaches prophecy. It draws the poet on to raptness, exaltation. The noble eloquence of the dramatic monologue, "Lincoln's Dream," first published in The New Republic, illustrates this aspect of Mr. Torrence's genius; "The Word That Walked Among the Ancient Trees," "Eye-Witness" and "The Apples," all poems of more than lyric length, testify that the poet's eyes have been able to see and sustain the glory. Indicating my own taste, I have enjoyed particularly, and shall expect to reread many times, the opening poem "Light," "Men and Wheat," "On Storm King Edge," "Harvest Home," "The Watcher," "Peace," "Prothalamium," "Outline" (though I wish the poet had altered the order of words in the final phrase), "The Apples," "Legend" (splendid!), "Monotone Triumphant," "Headland Orchard," "Survivors," "Sea Dream," "Three O'Clock," the familiar beautiful lyric "The Son"—I begin to find the list too long for enumeration. Moreover, the total worth of the book exceeds the sum of the parts, for it establishes communion with a fine poet and a spirit at once perceptive, humane and reconciled.

While I am about it, I should like to express not only for myself, but also—if it is not presumptuous—for others who contributed poetry to The New Republic from 1920-33 our appreciative consciousness of Mr. Torrence's service to poetry in his editorship during those years. He helped us all, a great deal; but that was only part of it.

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Medicine and Society

Society and Medical Progress, by Bernhard J. Stern. Princeton University Press. 264 pages. $3.

WITH THIS ADMIRABLE VOLUME Dr. Stern, a sociologist of distinction and originality, returns to the subject he first discussed in his "Social Factors in Medicine," written nearly fifteen years ago. Since that time the view that the medical sciences are part and parcel of our social heritage has been enormously strengthened by the increasing urgency of public-health problems, the work of the Committee on Costs of Medical Care; and by the vigorous writings of such men as Dr. Henry E. Sigerist, Surgeon General Thomas Parran, Dr. David Riesman, Dr. Iago Galdston, Paul de Kruif, Richard Shryock, Dr. Michael M. Davis and many others.

Dr. Stern's present volume is a direct outcome of his work under a grant from the Committee on Research in Medical Economics. His chief purpose is to show that the progress of medicine, both as an art and as a science, is functionally related to the development of society at large. His thesis, impressively documented at all points, is that this progress may be expected to continue only if medicine frankly accepts and honestly encourages its social obligations.

For the general reader Dr. Stern's book will be anything but dull, thanks to the author's talent for combining much valuable information with a vital point of view. Chapter Two, on the scientific foundations of medicine, is the best account known to me of the close dependence of medical techniques upon the general scientific, industrial and economic levels of a given period. Over and over again we see medicine sneering at developments in chemistry, physics and biology which later are to become its first lines of defense against disease. A similar picture of narrowness, bigotry and plain funk emerges from the author's masterly discussion of medical schools, hospitals, occupational diseases, epidemics and public health; and the chapter on resistances to medical change is a veritable catalogue of wasted opportunities and tragic errors.

But Dr. Stern is by no means a pessimist, and it is the peculiar value of his book that at every stage in his discussion of medical problems we are shown the possibility of their solution. Thus, in the chapters dealing with medical education, urbanization, income and health, the usual "factual" treatment is vitalized by a clear statement of objectives to be attained and by an analysis of the complex factors involved in what Dr. Sigerist has called "medicine and human welfare." That a scholar whose main work has been in the field of sociology should have written so well and with such authority on medicine is a further proof that the rigorous disciplines of science are inseparably linked with the needs of men and the urgent, constantly changing imperatives of society.

HAROLD WARD

Contributors

E. D. KENNEDY, for ten years an associate editor of Time and Fortune, is the author of "Dividends to Pay." His most recent book is "The Automobile Industry," published by Reynal and Hitchcock.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS, author of "Factories in the Field," is the California State Commissioner of Immigration and Housing. He has just finished a book for Little, Brown and Company which deals with the problem of agricultural and migratory workers in the United States.

JOHN DILLON sends us this poem from Washington, where he is in the government service.

VALENTINE ACKLAND, an English poet, is co-author, with Sylvia Townsend Warner, of a book of verse, "Whether a Dove or a Seagull."

GEORGE BIDDLE is the well known painter and sculptor.

WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT is a reporter on The Providence Journal and the author of a book of verse, "Biography for Traman."

GWENDOLEN HASTE is the author of a book of poems, "Young Land," and has contributed to Century, Scribner's, Poetry, The New Masses and The Nation. She won The Nation's Poetry Prize in 1922.

F. C. WEISKOPF is a German-Czecho-Slovakian novelist and critic, now living in the United States. Two of his novels, "Dawn Breaks" and "Danube Waltz," will be published in 1942.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH, poet and the Librarian of Congress, is the author of "Poems: 1924-1933," "Conquistador," "Public Speech" and other volumes.

GEORGE BARKER is a young English poet now living in this country. His "Selected Poems" were recently published by The Macmillan Company.

BERNHARD KNOLLENBERG is librarian of the Sterling Library at Yale University and the author of "Washington and the Revolution: A Reappraisal—Gates, Conway and the Continental Congress."

JAMES STERN, who lives in New York City, is the Irish author of two collections of short stories, "The Heartless Land" and "Something Wrong." Other stories of his have appeared in Harper's Bazaar, Esquire and Story.

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HAROLD WARD contributes articles to various periodicals on the subject of the social implications of science and technology. He is the editor of an anthology, "New Worlds in Science," recently published by Robert McBride and Company.

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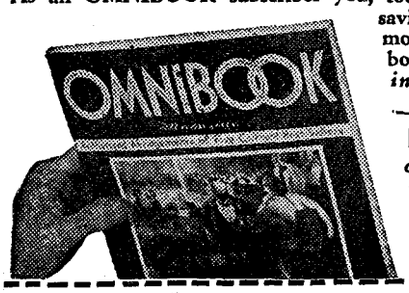

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